

FROEBEL'S LETTERS
to his Wife and Others

A.H. Heinemann



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FRIEDRICH FROEBEL.

Born at Oberweissbach, April 21, 1782.

Died at Marienthal, June 21, 1852.

FROEBEL LETTERS

EDITED

WITH EXPLANATORY NOTES AND ADDITIONAL MATTER

BY

ARNOLD H. HEINEMANN

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FROEBEL LETTERS

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FRIEDRICH FROEBEL

HIS STRONG AND GENTLE NATURE

THE man who yields his entire being to his idea, sacrificing every selfish interest to his spiritual tendencies of loving service to his altruistic ideals; the inspired enthusiast, whose every thought and word and deed bear the imprint of his devotion to his mission, he is a being whom no one susceptible of great and noble sentiments can approach without admiration and awe.

Such a man was Friedrich Froebel. Look at his face and you will find him such. What power and determination are manifest in these features! Yet how strangely is this force of character coupled with a tender desire of loving and being loved, expressed in the almost womanly forms of the mouth and chin. And look into those genial eyes, expressive of unselfish devotion and ever ardent enthusiasm! No doubt, this man was the incarnate union of unusual vigor with a love almost motherly, a union requisite to constitute a man an ingenious educator of youth and a friend of

childhood. To receive and to return love, is to the child an essential condition of full growth and of the enjoyment of life and happiness. Froebel had an instinctive feeling of this happiness of the child standing before him, and found the full satisfaction of his desire of love in this communion of his mind with the mind of childhood.

This trait of character was the key that opened the character of womankind in general to the understanding of Froebel, and made him the most sagacious interpreter of the wants and the vocation of woman. This is the explanation of the remarkable fact that the mysteries of the Froebel education have attracted few male students, and that there is rarely found a true woman who, on being introduced to the principles of the Kindergarten, does not understand them, and begin to practise them with an enthusiasm akin to that of Froebel himself.

And this Froebel enthusiasm is not transient. If you doubt its persistence, look at Frau Luise Froebel, the widow of the Kindergartener. Upwards of forty years have passed since her husband was taken away from her, yet the ardor of her enthusiasm has not cooled in the least. She continues as she was when walking by his side, a living piece of his own self, in whose soul we can recognize and study the soul of Friedrich Froebel.

I have no hesitation in saying that Frau Luise Froebel is the spiritual creature of Friedrich Froebel. He made her what she is: he implanted in her those remarkable principles and traits of character that distinguish her and elevate her above the common crowd. There is in her a depth of perception, a wealth of sentiment, a loving and never withholding, never weakening sympathy for all that is good and elevating,—chiefly for such things as concern the development of the good and beautiful in man,—such as we know to have characterized Froebel himself. For all which constitutes the real life and genius of Frau Froebel, she is indebted to his teaching and his influence. His genius pervades her as the creative spirit giving life to her soul.

True to her mission, Frau Froebel has always tried to live and act according to the principles of her late husband, and to carry out his wishes and bequests. Among the latter the wish to have his correspondence published, was one of the most prominent, repeated with great emphasis when he lay on his deathbed. In his letters, he said, he had expressed his ideas with greater clearness and fulness than in his works. But for nearly forty years Frau Froebel had never been able to find anybody willing to study the letters and edit them. It is well known that the style of the writings of Froebel is exceedingly involved and difficult to

understand. It is not an easy task to prepare them for publication. And there was another circumstance rendering it difficult for literary men to undertake the labor of publishing the letters, namely, this, that until quite recently there was no demand for the writings of Froebel, and, consequently, no publisher could be found to bring them out.

This difficulty was experienced by the editor of the correspondence published in this volume. When Frau Froebel proposed the matter, this correspondence was prepared, but no publisher could be induced to undertake its publication. The manuscript has been lying for years until at last a more congenial spirit seems to be prepared for its reception.

The reader will see for himself that this correspondence renders the ideas of Froebel in some places clearer and more intelligible than they appear in his more voluminous writings. The want of a clear and succinct treatise of the entire system of Froebel had been felt by all those who had studied his writings in past times. When the assembly of teachers and friends met at Liebenstein in 1851 at the special call of Froebel, in order to examine and report upon his system, they passed a resolution requesting him to write down and publish a complete handbook of his system, of which only single chapters and disconnected parts were known. Froebel had promised to fulfil the

wish, if his old friend and assistant, Middendorff, would help him in writing the book. But Middendorff was not able at that time to offer the needed assistance. The consequence was, that the book was never written. So much greater is the necessity of studying the letters which Froebel wrote to friends.

The letters offered in this volume have not been printed before. They have been prepared from the original letters by Froebel. It would be impossible to prepare an exact translation of these, as of any of the letters written by Froebel, and then expect to find readers for them. The difficulty of understanding Froebel in the original is so great, that there are only few who will attempt to decipher his meaning, and the difficulty would be greater in an exact translation. Anything approaching a literal translation has not, therefore, been attempted in this volume. What is here published is the sense or meaning of what Froebel said, as near and faithful to the original text as the subject-matter will allow. It is the Froebel letters set forth in an English dress, fitting the original as closely as possible.

Personal remarks which neither added to the history nor assisted the understanding of the Froebel system, have been omitted. The same is to be said of remarks of a purely local value. But when it is added that Frau Froebel has herself looked over the German manuscript and approved of it, the reader will feel assured that he

holds the true original Froebel in hand, although the dress has been modernized.

The notes added to the letters tend to assist the teacher or mother in drawing practical lessons from the theories enunciated by Froebel, and to give information upon historical and local points not generally known in this country. The publisher to whom the manuscript was first submitted, suggested that such notes would increase the chances of selling the book, because they would assist the general public in understanding Froebel, and be chiefly interesting to Kindergarteners and mothers. And since some of these notes were published in the *Kindergarten Magazine*, many Kindergarteners have written to the editor, stating that the notes were of great use to them. For these reasons the notes are printed again in this book.

Friedrich Froebel's letters published in this volume give a good picture of his condition in those years, of his schemes and hopes, his theories and practical plans. "I consider it very desirable," says J. Barop in a letter addressed to Von Arnswald, "that the materials which can show us the life and labors of Friedrich Froebel, should be collected. I agree that too much must not be expected to result from such a collection all at once. More time must elapse before he can be entirely understood and appreciated. But a time will come, when an

impartial critic will recognize the ideas that filled the whole of his soul, that pushed him onward, that did not suffer him to rest and keep quiet, that constituted the meaning and scope of his endeavors. We can surely say of him: ‘The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.’ As a certain distance is necessary for the eye of the body to produce an image of a thing fully cognizable, thus there are phases in the history of mankind which render a space of time of a greater or less duration necessary for the eye of the mind to properly recognize their profounder meaning, their essential substance, and to distinguish in the man who is the representative of the phase, the essential from the non-essential, and, I might say, the divine from the human in him.”

The correspondence here published contains some important material by which the understanding of the spirit and principles of Froebel will be rendered easier. It gives the history of a period of transition through which the educational principles of Froebel were passing at the time. After he had been convinced by experience that education, in order to be fully efficacious, must begin much earlier than at school age, he made great efforts to convince the people of the same idea and engage their sympathies in carrying it out. In order to effect this he endeavored to found general educational unions in which fathers were to be enrolled as

the heads and rulers of families. These tendencies are explained in Letters 1 to 3.

But the responses he received from fathers did not satisfy him. Neither did the results of a Kindergarten, where the children were too old already for a fundamental training. The education of man, he now saw clearly, must begin earlier yet. It must begin at his birth, or, to be quite correct, it ought to begin years previous to his birth. Such an education must necessarily be self-education of a kind that can hardly be expected in man, that is, in the fathers. It is naturally and almost exclusively found within the power of woman to thus educate herself. And it is, consequently, not the fathers but the mothers, or woman, that ought to have the main voice and influence in the education of man.

Froebel looked upon woman as the true natural educator of man. But during the years when this correspondence was written, the conviction that education was the true vocation of woman, grew to the intensity of a faith in Froebel's mind, dominating his whole being. This faith proclaimed that woman had not a holier, if, in fact, she had any other vocation than that of the education of man. Thus, in the second part of this correspondence, he speaks no longer of educational unions, but of the training of woman in normal schools for her sublime educational mission.

The suggestion of educational unions of the lay popu-

lation intending to study and promote the ends of the education of the rising generation in the particular interests of every locality, was not lost upon the world, however. There are now many so-called general educational societies in Germany which have the above end in view. Their members are not only fathers, but, on the contrary, it is the fair sex that supplies the majority of members. Altogether, since Froebel wrote his appeals to woman to turn to her natural calling, and devote her energies and concentrate her interests upon education, this advice has been taken by many in the fatherland of Froebel. It is not so much on general problems, such as equal suffrage, prohibition, etc., but on educational questions, that women will unite in Germany in forming societies. These societies are different from the National Educational Union of America. The latter is composed of teachers, and represents the interests of that class of people whose business is school-teaching. That is not what Froebel intended in his educational union. He had no particular desire to advance the interests of public-school teachers. His aim was the advancement of the interests of early childhood, or the advance of the education of man in general. And that is what the Allgemeine Erziehungsvereine (general educational unions) in Germany intend doing.

Such unions seem also needed in this country. They would not antagonize but might work in harmony

with the Teachers' unions. But their great aim should be to, study and advance the interests of education as indicated by local conditions.

With the conviction that the true vocation of woman is the education of man in its entire bearing, Froebel stepped out of and beyond the narrow boundaries enclosing the Kindergarten and school, and began looking upon the whole life of man as the realm in which to render effective the art of the education of man. And it was for the realization of this ideal that he proceeded to call for the co-operation of woman. Thenceforward he devoted himself with the greatest enthusiasm to the task of persuading and preparing woman for this her great mission in life. It is to the realization of this end that the letters concluding this correspondence are devoted. Among them are found most remarkable utterances in which the genius of Froebel rose to a sublimity of poetical conception and a prophetic foresight without a parallel in any of his other writings. It is proposed that the letters containing these appeals to woman shall appear in another volume to be published shortly. It was the same idea of the preparation of woman for her grand vocation as the educator of man which Froebel attempted to realize in his normal courses for young ladies, started at Keilhau and carried out more completely at Marienthal. The lectures which Froebel gave at these courses will be published as soon

as they can be made ready. The aim and end of Froebel in his normal courses was to enable his fair pupils to comprehend and realize the principles of their own educational duties. And, it may be added, that in the pursuit of this high ideal he found at Marienthal, during the closing years of his life, a greater satisfaction, with peace of mind and a restful spirit, than had fallen to his lot at any previous period of his life.

The gentleman to whom Froebel addressed these letters, is called Colonel Hermann von Arnswald. He resides at Eisenach, second capital of the grand duchy of Saxe Weimar, in Thuringia, Germany. The colonel had passed three years of his school time at the "Allgemeine Deutsche Erziehungs-Anstalt" * at Keilhau at the time when the school was still under the head mastership of Friedrich Froebel himself. Regarding the value of these letters he writes : "Whether the letters are worth publication or not, they cannot fail to serve all those who have not the leisure to dive into the pedagogical works of Froebel, by giving them a short, clear, and warm conception of the ideas which the great educator entertained concerning child-training and which he labored to realize in life."

Speaking of Keilhau, the colonel says : "One morning at five o'clock I was seated in a carriage by the side of my parents for a day's trip through the charming forest dales up toward the secluded valley of Keilhau,

* Public German Educational Establishment.

where we arrived about 5 P.M. Three strong, well-set men welcomed us,— Froebel, Langethal, and Middendorff. Froebel took me directly to the boys, with whom I was soon at home,— so soon and so thoroughly, in fact, that my mother felt quite sad to see how cheerful her boy was at parting when tears filled her own eyes.

"In the domestic life of the institution strict order had to be observed. Every pupil was supplied with the necessary facilities for the cleansing of the body and clothes. New-comers were minutely examined every morning before breakfast to ascertain their personal cleanliness. Whoever was found negligent in this respect, had his allowance of milk for breakfast stopped, receiving nothing but a piece of bread. In fact, there were hardly any other penalties than reductions in the regular meals. Whoever deserved punishment, found at dinner or supper a piece of bread on his plate, which meant to say that he had to pass by all other dishes without tasting of them. It was exceedingly rare that any punishment had to be inflicted. But, on the other hand, it was an inevitable rule that the penalty followed in the footsteps of the evil deed, as the following occurrence may prove. Large dishes of strawberries were standing ready for supper, when I, passing through the room, yielded to the temptation of tasting a strawberry. Froebel had seen me ; and when we took our seats for

supper, I found on my plate — the ominous piece of bread."

In explanation of this mode of punishment by giving dry bread at meals, or withholding cooked meats, chiefly relishes and sweets, it may be said that such penalties were all the fashion during the first half of this century, and that, as far as the editor's own experience goes, these punishments were not known to have a deleterious influence upon the pupils' health. Insufficiency of nourishment was carefully avoided, of course. But a reduction or simplification of meals, as frequently practised in those days, was certainly less injurious to the growing child than the modern fashion of overloading and stimulating the system by too great an excitation of the appetite, by too rich relishes, and too great an amount of food in general. It is owing to this latter fashion of the present day that this nation has been entitled the "dyspeptic's paradise."

Herr von Arnswald continues his reminiscences of Keilhau as follows : "Whoever spoiled anything, had to see that it was repaired. A boy having broken a window by carelessness or in mischief, had to take the frame on his back and carry it, in whatever weather might be, to Blankenburg, a distance of four miles, and bring it back repaired." German window-frames are not made like ours, that is, not of two parts sliding up and down. They are commonly made of four parts swinging on

hinges ; two parts, or wings on each side ; which fit into each other and close by hooks in the centre. Such a part, or wing of a window (to be carried by a boy), was, therefore, less than half the size of an American half-window, and contained four small panes, each measuring about one-twelfth of a common American windowpane.

"I do not remember," says Von Arnswald, "ever to have heard any angry discussion, scolding, or an exchange of bad names. Improper conduct was invariably punished, but a look was sufficient to pass the sentence. There were no fines, no pupil having or needing any money."

"During the three years I passed at the institution, no medical man ever set foot in it. Small injuries occurred now and then in the gymnasium, which were always cured by the boys' mutual helpfulness. One day when I was at the top of the climbing-rope, my strength gave out, and I slid down rapidly, holding with both hands and feet to the rope. My hands were burned so badly that I was unable to dress without help during four weeks. My neighbor in the bedroom dressed my hands attentively, but nobody else spoke about or seemed to notice the mishap."

It is not the editor's intention to recommend an imitation of this treatment of the wounded boy : even a Froebel, in his preoccupation, may go too far in his heroic treatment of, or his neglect of, accident or disease.

"In the life of the institution, implicit obedience was blended with individual liberty. Oh, there was a fresh, cheerful life during intervals and hours of recreation. We played, built huts, laid out new paths, etc. Gymnastic exercises, however, were never performed at those times, but only in regular lessons with strict order and under command."

This rule of having regular gymnastic exercises only in lessons, with strict order and under the superintendence and guidance of a master, is not peculiar to the Froebel institution, but the rule in all German schools. Regular gymnastic exercise is not considered there as a time of recreation, but as a training of the body by masters who have made the gymnastic art their study. Such a teacher of gymnastics must understand anatomy and physiology, chiefly the physiology of the growing body. He must know which parts of the body to exercise, and which to treat with care in girls or in boys. He ought to be able to treat certain forms of disease and malformation. He ought to be able to diagnose incipient deformities and to arrest their development by judicious exercise, and by similar exercises to treat deformities already developed. He ought to know the times when to exercise and when to rest the body.

Physical culture is frequently carried to an injurious extent, owing to want of such knowledge. Public-school

teachers are frequently taught gymnastics to be practised in the intervals between lessons at school. This does not seem commendable. When the system is overstrained by intellectual exercises, it is in need of relaxation, but not of the continuation of the strain in another direction. Intervals between lessons ought to be filled up by play, that is, by free and easy action of muscles and senses, but not by any compulsory attention to gymnastics. It is this principle to which the colonel refers in the above remark upon gymnastics.

"A most remarkable feature of the school was this," continues the colonel, "that there were no vacations. No pupil ever went home for a while and then returned. But a tramp through the woods, extending over several days at a time, was repeatedly made during the summer season."

This feature, that there were no holidays, is a remarkable proof of the fact that Froebel's school was different from all the schools of his time and of ours. The fact was a practical proof of the principle that the pupils of a school ought never to be in need of holidays, or of a cessation of school work. Such a necessity results from the fact that the pupils are overtired and that their health of body is weakened by school work; or from the fact, not less injurious, that the pupils do not like going to school, and that the school duties are unpleasant, if not hateful to them. In a school so

well managed as that of Froebel, all the work and life is naturally delightful to the pupils ; it calls forth all their interests and energies in the most healthful manner, and strengthens their bodies and minds instead of weakening them. If that be the case, there is no need of any holidays for the pupils, because they do not require either relaxation or recuperation. But teachers are frequently in need of both relaxation and recuperation, and ought to have them whenever they are needed ; which may be even more frequently than is the case at present. In order to enable all the teachers to take the necessary care of their health, some means would have to be found to continue the pupils in active school work during the absence of their regular teachers.

Regarding their tramps through the woods, the colonel continues, saying : " We wandered very often to the Greifenstein near Blankenburg. There we had coffee and cakes, and the birthdays of both teachers and pupils were gleefully remembered on such occasions. Those were the only times when coffee was exceptionally given in the place of milk. During the common every-day life, there was never any other drink served but milk or water. Of wine, punch, beer, or similar drinks, not a drop ever passed our lips.

" There were other festivals in the open air, most of them of a patriotic nature. Of such was, for instance, the celebration of the 18th of October." This date is

the anniversary of the battle at Leipzig, fought by Napoleon I. against the united armies of the Prussians, Austrians, and Russians, in 1813; the loss of which compelled Napoleon to withdraw his armies from Germany and confine himself to France. The Germans call this contest the "battle of the nations," which delivered Germany from French dominion. The anniversary of the battle was celebrated in Germany every year until, after the war of 1870-71, the day of Sedan was substituted for that of Leipzig.

"At the celebration of the 18th October," says Von Arnswald, "the national sentiment was powerfully developed. On a high mountain-top a big fire was made in the evening, and when the flames raised their golden tongues skyward, popular and patriotic songs were sung, and we listened to the inspiring words of our teachers, every one of whom had fought through the wars of deliverance as volunteer, and who had been faithful comrades in the service of the great fatherland.

"We also enjoyed many a pleasant outing during the winter. There were frequent sleigh-drives and hours on the ice. I remember several occasions when we were called out of bed to enjoy a splendid sleigh-drive in a clear moon-lit winter night. But I do not remember ever having heard anything of colds being caught on such occasions. As a rule, our winter evenings were passed in doing manual work and in making music.

"A truly elevating celebration was the Christmas festival. On Christmas Eve we were treated to a poppy soup, which made us sleep very soundly; and at five in the morning on Christmas Day we received our presents. There was, first, a short religious service, followed by the presentation of gifts, after which we were taken to church.

"I lived at the Froebel school in Keilhau for three years. At the end of the time I went home to the house of my parents, healthy in soul and body. After a life so natural and so completely secluded from all the injurious impressions of the outside world, as I have above described in a few words, there could not possibly have been another result than perfect health."

Colonel von Arnswald has also been kind enough to favor me with a description of the first Kindergarten that ever was, namely, the first institution of the kind founded by Froebel himself at Blankenburg in the valley of the river Schwarza, near Rudolstadt, Thuringia. The place is known for its silver mines, and is at present a well-frequented summer resort. The colonel says: "It was in the middle of the third decade of the century that I passed three years of my childhood in perfect happiness at Keilhau. But I will not speak of them this time, because my mind is occupied with another remembrance of an event that happened in 1839,

when my desire for roving led me to Keilhau to look once more upon my dearly beloved teachers.

"I found the nest empty : they had all wandered into the mountains, like myself. So I continued my tramp toward Blankenburg, where Froebel and Middendorff were at the time trying to carry out their idea of the Kindergarten.

"Arriving at the place, I found my Middendorff seated by the pump in the market-place, surrounded by a crowd of little children. Going near them I saw that he was engaged in mending the jacket of a boy. By his side sat a little girl busy with thread and needle upon another piece of clothing ; one boy had his feet in a bucket of water, washing them carefully ; other girls and boys were standing around, attentively looking upon the strange picture of real life before them, and waiting for something to turn up to interest them personally.

"Our meeting was of the most cordial kind, but Middendorff did not interrupt the business in which he was engaged. 'Come, children,' he cried, 'let us go into the garden ;' and with loud cries of joy the crowd of little men followed the splendid-looking, tall man, with willing feet running all around him.

"The garden was not a garden, however, but a barn with a small room and an entrance hall. In the entrance Middendorff welcomed the children, and played

with them an all-round game, ending in the flight of the little ones into the room, where every one of them sat down in his place on the bench and took hold of his gift box.

"During the time when the little ones were thus living individually, I was able to converse at pleasure with my beloved teacher, and at the same time pay attention to the individual life of the children. There was no waiting until languor appeared. They were all very busy with their blocks, when, after half an hour's time, the summons was spoken, 'Come, children, let us sing and spring!' And when the game was finished, the little people went away full of joy and life, every one passing by his dear old friend and teacher, and giving him his little hand for a grateful good-by."

This gives a pretty clear view of what the first Kindergarten was like. Froebel and his shadow, Middendorff, understood their end and the conditions around them perfectly, and accommodated themselves to them, as the picture of Middendorff and his little crowd at the pump on the market-place shows, where he acted as patching tailor for one boy, and superintended the activity of a girl patching for herself, and a boy washing his feet. "Froebel and Middendorff," says Von Arnswald, "had the greatest difficulty in persuading the inhabitants of Blankenburg to merely allow them to have any intercourse with the little children," for the farmer,

like other people, thinks that teaching a child to play means as much as making it a sluggard and a loafer. Yet they persisted and succeeded. Still, the inhabitants thought they had done the two educators a favor in allowing them to spend their time upon the children, and were far from thinking that a Kindergartener should be paid. Thus Froebel was compelled to discontinue the institution.

"I shall never forget this image of the first Kindergarten so lovable and cheerful," adds the colonel. "I preserved it all in my memory, and used it as a pattern, when, in time, I had occasion to establish an educational garden in my own home.

"It was about the middle of the fifth decade of the century when I founded my own home, and had occasion to have a Kindergarten. I sent an announcement of my engagement to my old paternal friend, and was greatly pleased when this letter gave occasion for a longer correspondence upon the foundation of family associations, and of normal schools for female educators.

"During those years I also had the great joy of having my old friend repeatedly with me as my guest. It seemed strange to me that Froebel should be rarely able to properly control his overflowing current of thought when speaking to assemblies in public, and that he should have such a ponderous style in writing,

when I had occasion to notice, that, in friendly private intercourse, he spoke clearly and to the point, his language mirroring his clear mind and open heart; and truly wonderful was it to see how rapidly he was able to gain the attachment and love of the little folks."

Concerning the subsequent development of the Kindergarten, Herr von Arnswald holds peculiar views, which may be here reproduced because they come from an old pupil and intimate friend of Froebel's. "It is true I have not paid great attention to the development of Kindergartens," says he, "but it would seem to me that there is a tendency to transform them into preparatory institutes for the public school. I am acting in the spirit of Froebel, I think, if I call a 'Halt!' to all these endeavors, and direct the attention of both parents and educators to the original idea of the Kindergarten.

"Froebel did not pursue any other end than to increase the joy of parents in their children, and to provide a condition of the life of childhood that renders it pure and beautiful. That a child when watched over and cared for sympathetically, will develop more rapidly, may be an effect, but it is not the end of the Kindergarten.

"The gifts and games were offered by Froebel for the purpose of satisfying and directing the spontaneous impulse to work, but not as a sort of nourishment to feed the mind of the child. He preferred open pasture

to stable feeding. In other words, the direction, 'Come, let us live for our children,' does not mean that we shall teach children by playing, but that we shall play with them in a sensible way.

"According to this view, the original idea of the Kindergarten can and should be realized in every family. It is not enough for parents, that have neither sense nor inclination to assimilate the principle of the Froebel system, to send their children to the Kindergarten for no other purpose than that of keeping the little ones from home. If everybody would surely rejoice to see the *crêches*, or children's refuges, transformed into Kindergartens, the reverse of this process, that is, the transformation of the Kindergarten into children's refuges with the appearance of schools, would surely be a crime against the nature of the child.

"The parents and relatives of children are responsible if the growth of the Kindergarten is like that of a hothouse, which would dry up the natural fertility of the ground, that is, of the life in the family; a result such as we see already growing out of the present unsatisfactory relation between school and home.

"It is this deterioration of the life of the family which causes the complaints which are everywhere heard of the want of discipline and order in youth. So long as the school alone is expected to undertake the whole education of youth, the arrogance of a false

science will increase, and the authority of parents, masters, and teachers will be paralyzed.

"The foundation of education must be laid in early childhood. Thence onward through the Kindergarten, elementary and high school, technical schools and colleges, the parents or guardians of children must go hand in hand with the school. In order to do this, it is particularly necessary for parents and educators to observe and direct the impulse of activity in youth. A child accustomed to be helpful at home will readily understand that knowledge ought to be well balanced by an ability to act. If that end be reached, will and power, fortified by knowledge, elevated by the fear of God, and moved by love and gratitude for parents and teachers, will grow strong in the child, and produce a character of which we can truly be proud.

"From all these considerations, I think I am entitled to conclude that the original idea of the Kindergarten can and must be rooted in the family, and must likewise be realized in every individual. The little man must grow to be a full man, firmly rooted in the life of the universe, as a plant is rooted in the ground, and holding his head upward in the light which is supplied by the force of self-evolution.

"His home and family are to the child his universe narrowly limited. In it humanity and patriotism must take root and sprout forth, and in it the young plant

must be supported and nursed until it has grown strong enough to be able to withstand the storm and stress without outward support."

Colonel von Arnswald had many and good opportunities to become thoroughly acquainted with Friedrich Froebel, his principles, modes of thought, manner of expression, and final aims and ends. For that reason the views of the colonel have been published. Besides, Herr von Arnswald does not stand alone with these views. There are numbers of people who have studied the Froebel material only, his games, occupations, and gifts, but have not followed his philosophy. Thus they have learned a great deal, and their children, or wards and pupils, have been wonderfully benefited by such knowledge in their education and development; nevertheless, he or she whose knowledge of Froebelism is confined to the play-school practice, has not mastered the whole of Froebel; that is to say, the principle or science of the system remains hidden beyond his mental horizon.

Froebel had clearly seen that to the child play is real work, serving to develop and educate the growing being. His Kindergarten practice was not intended to be a mere collection of toys "to render the life of childhood pure and joyful, and to increase the joy which parents feel in their children;" he intended the Kindergarten to be the first step in an educational

path which should lead the child to as perfect a development of his nature as was possible. It is true he considered the family the "mother-school," — not only the fundamental but the most important and most effective part of the education of man; and it was the greatest, yea, we may almost say, the sole object of the closing years of his life to educate woman to be the teacher, the true mother of man.

So far Colonel von Arnswald is correct. But Froebel went a long way farther in his ideas and intentions. He wanted all the more advanced stages of education, more particularly those of school life, to be in full harmony with, and based upon, the same principles which he had practically embodied in his Kindergarten method. It was his intention to make the Kindergarten not only a, but the sole, "preparatory institution for the public school." The colonel is not correct in pronouncing against such a tendency. It goes without saying, that Froebel knew perfectly well that his great end could never be reached unless the public school should change its system to a great extent by adopting a good deal of the fundamental principle of the Kindergarten. But he also believed in the final victory of his ideal: that is to say, that the public school would recognize and introduce his principle so far as its more purely intellectual pursuits would allow.

It is a fact that many of the old pupils of Froebel

failed to understand the fundamental principle of the great Kindergartener. In the case of the colonel, such a misconception is intelligible, from the fact that he was a pupil of Froebel's at a time when the latter was as yet working in the old rut of the common-school practice; that is, before his Kindergarten ideas had been matured. Froebel was known to him as a common-school master of advanced ideas, who was deeply interested in improving the mother school or family life. Of the Kindergarten principle, little Hermann knew nothing. And when in later years he became acquainted with the Kindergarten he probably never understood or was led to understand it. He says in his letter introducing the above views, that "it may seem bold for a man not versed in educational matters to pronounce on them, but it cannot be denied that the talent of education is imbibed at our mother's breasts; and that an educator need not do anything but observe without prejudice, and learn from the spirit of education, rooted in the family, and thence becoming visible in every stratum of mankind." These remarks prove that our friend the colonel does not fully realize the needs and the duties of an educator, although his intercourse with Froebel doubtless greatly helped him in that respect. And we have every reason to be grateful to the colonel, first, for having given occasion to Froebel to write these letters; secondly, for the kindness with

which he consented to have them published; and thirdly, for his splendid descriptions of the Keilhau school and the Blankenburg Kindergarten. For these things, the name of Hermann von Arnswald will remain connected with and remembered in the history of Froebel's career.

One of the letters addressed by Froebel to Von Arnswald was omitted because it contained nothing to elucidate the ideas or history of the system. But as it shows the condition in which Froebel's worldly circumstances were at that time, an extract from it may here be inserted, because it shows how intense was the struggle which he had to fight all his life. The letter is dated from Keilhau, November 20, 1847. Von Arnswald had ordered the first three gifts which Froebel sends with this letter. "I am deep in your debt for many a kindness, and ought not to have drawn on you for the small amount," writes Froebel. "But, in the first place, it would seem mean to try to pay off my large debt in this way, for I hope a more suitable opportunity will offer for the discharge of my obligations to you; and, in the second place, I have to freely confess, that, at the present moment, I am not able to act otherwise in this business."

Froebel did not have the gifts in stock when Von Arnswald ordered them, and had to have them made. The above words seem to imply that he did not possess the few cents to pay for them, and was there-

fore compelled to collect from his friend the price, in order to be able to discharge his own debt for them.

Truly, Friedrich Froebel was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," when considered in the light of worldly business and outward success. But he had his reward in his own soul. His great enthusiasm elevated him above all the sorrows and privations of the life of the body. In spite of all his struggles he was never unhappy. The serenity of the life of his soul was never overcast. He had chosen the one thing needful, and had never occasion to repent of his choice.



FROEBEL'S HOUSE OF BIRTH.

From a photo taken by Frau Froebel ten years ago.

FROEBEL'S LETTERS

CHAPTER I

THE GENERAL EDUCATIONAL UNION

A PATERNAL LETTER.

LETTER I.—FROEBEL TO VON ARNSWALD.

KEILHAU, Feb. 6, 1845.

MY DEAR, FAITHFUL HERMANN,—I repeat my warmest, most cordial thanks for my reception and the numerous proofs of your unchanged filial faithfulness, which you gave me so unmistakably during the short time of my sojourn at Eisenach. The experience of my life has taught me that such sentiments produce their own reward in blossoms and fruits of life; for which reason I am entertaining the joyful hope that your children and grandchildren will follow you in similar sentiments and similar deeds. Thus they will form the living garland that will surround you and your bride in peace and joy.

Be firm in these sentiments! They are the inexhaustible fountain from which issues the clear current of a life, blessed in itself, and, consequently, also bestowing blessings upon its surroundings. Your present life furnishes already proof of this, as is evident from what you tell me of your activity and your aims, which carry

the conviction to my mind that your whole life will prove you to be what I wish a pupil, or a son of mine to be, namely, a mind of single purpose, patient, truthfully resigned to the will of God, always active in realizing true humanity at home and abroad, in his family as in his calling, in social as in public life.

As long as we live we continue pupils of experience, and of Providence, which is self-education. As we grow more and more conscious of this condition, our liberty and self-determination increase. In the same harmony with the Educator of the world and of mankind we should attempt to educate our surroundings.¹ I rejoice greatly to see in your work that we agree in this thought. You know that it is not necessary to make education a special calling before carrying out this ideal ; I even think that he who is not connected with the educational calling, frequently does comparatively the greater service. The reason for this seeming anomaly may be found in the circumstance that natural education does not require a great variety of accomplishments, but rather a unity and thoroughness of life ; not a knowledge of many things, but the performance of that which has been recognized as good ; in a word, not precept but example.

Every man of sound mind can be educated up to this standard. It is only necessary to develop the senses, i.e., the perceptive faculty, and to form the inward sense, i.e., the intuitive faculty correspondingly. Exercise the body in a manner to render the members and organs fit to act at all times. Or, make the body a useful instrument and a practical tool of the mind,

¹ See notes at end of chapter.

which is to be developed so as to constitute a pure disposition and a strong character, or a firm will readily manifesting itself in action.² Such a firm will and the ability of ready action do not postulate an extensive scholarship but merely thoroughness. Anybody is capable of thoroughness within his or her limited sphere of life, and upon any level of mental faculties, and in any calling. It is only requisite to understand this condition. Let us then assist men to gain the consciousness of their own ability to act, and impart to them a conviction of the universal need of education.³

It is this end I want to reach by "educational associations," to be spread all over the country, all of them being organically connected with one another. I rejoice that you are interested in the idea and will lend it your active co-operation, and I hope you will succeed in establishing such a society, for which reason I enclose draft of an invitation to form an association, explaining the principles and purposes to be held in view.*

I shall be happy to supply every additional explanation you may desire. I have also mentioned the matter to some public-spirited gentlemen at Gotha and Rudolstadt, who have promised their active co-operation. With us, at Keilhau, the matter is already past the stage of suggestion and in course of practical execution. Our pastor, a very enlightened and active gentleman, is a great help and support to us.⁴

I should have wished you had been here on Shrove Tuesday to enjoy our carnival. It would have been a vivid recollection of your school-days at Keilhau which you might have lived over again in part, for the

* The draft is printed at the end of this letter.

former spirit is still ruling among us. The pupils, great and small, had arranged masked processions, which were exceedingly well executed. Their pleasure was heightened by the assistance of some grown-up ladies and gentlemen. A male quartette gave us a number of comic songs, each of them being performed in costumes in keeping with the contents of the song. Among the rest there were some travellers' or wanderers' songs in which the singers appeared in tourists' clothes, and travelled, or marched to the sounds of the songs. There were some masks not known to anybody which aroused a deal of curiosity, increased by the fact that they all professed to be members of the "order of mutes." Delphic priests in ancient Greek costume made their appearance, and vouchsafed some oracular prophecies of a nature as amusing as they were startling. A postman came with a big mail-bag from which he distributed not only letters but also presents of great variety, creating a deal of enjoyment and surprise. Having been encored, he came a second time, playing his part as naturally and artistically to the end as he had commenced. It is a matter of course and need hardly be mentioned, that the closing and the crowning part of the festival consisted of an enjoyable dance.

I wish you and your bride could some day be with us on such a day of genial glee.

Your paternal friend,

FRIEDRICH FROEBEL.

GENERAL EDUCATIONAL UNION

INVITATION AS DRAFTED BY FROËBEL AND ADDRESSED
BY HIM TO FATHERS⁵

Great and important are the ideas that agitate our period. And this ideal agitation is more widespread than was any similar movement in any previous age. It is the issue of this agitation which will determine the happiness and peace of millions of men. No class and no condition of people will be exempt; the high and the lowly, dwellers in cities and farmers, the scholar and the uneducated, each and all will be affected by the issue.

An inquiry into the cause and tendency of this agitation pervading all conditions of life, demonstrates a single and uniform solution, viz.: *education* in general, and in particular the *education of children in their first years of life* preceding the age at which they can be received at the public school, is the true solution found.

Listen to the voices of the most thoughtful men, experienced fathers and careful mothers, in every condition of life, and you will hear them say that their continued observation and thought have forced on them the same conclusion, namely,—the education of youth cannot, must not, continue as it is at present.

This feeling of unrest has induced many experiments in the educational field. But a survey of all the means already proposed as improvements, of all the ways already trod, fails to find anything that has really approached near to the desired goal.

We must not rest, not stand idle, then. The philanthropist, the father of the home circle, the mother of the family, cannot forego the help so much needed in every way. They want to protect their children and children's children from the diseases of the time, which are wont to assume new appearances from year to year, and will return regularly in ever-increasing intensity, demanding more victims every time they reappear.

Do you look for help? for deliverance? You need not look far. Help is near, as it will be always and everywhere in times of universal uneasiness. All you need do, is to look for relief in the right direction. In order to recognize the direction which our efforts ought to take, we must not close our eyes to the fact that our shortcomings in educational, as in any other social concerns, are mostly produced by our isolation, and by that scattering of our efforts, which renders it impossible for the individual to follow the road leading to a necessary reform.

But why not travel that road in the society of others? What we have hitherto failed to achieve because of our isolation and the wasting of our strength in individual efforts, we shall be much better prepared to accomplish in union.

There are already unions, or societies of all sorts, associating for united action professional people and laymen, men of every condition and calling and of every degree of education. There is not a single union, or society, but is founded upon the principle of obviating the scattering of individual efforts by a union of forces. The losses which this scattering of the strength of individuals produces, are not anywhere so

great and so lasting in their injurious effects as in the educational field. And yet, there is no concern of life, in the prosecution and the results of which every human being is so intensely interested, as in the education of the growing generation. That is why everybody ought to do his utmost to make sure of the best educational results possible, by associating with others for the furtherance of the common knowledge of the proper means, and for their joint application.

There are educational societies in many places constituted to advance some particular line of education. But there are no associations having in view the entire series of the successive stages of the education of the growing generations of every age, beginning with the education of the infant in the cradle, and following the period of growth in every direction. Such associations have hardly been proposed anywhere, although they would result in blessings without measure for the individual as well as for the whole of mankind.

Such an association for the improvement of the means and methods of education is, however, the most important and most pressing need of life. You need only look upon the manifold discords and the clashing interests in domestic as in public life, in order to see how deficient the preparation of man is for his place in society. Join hands in order to assist one another and to make united efforts for the purpose of producing a universal improvement of education. The most urgent improvement needed is that of infant education. The training and development of early childhood is the basis all subsequent education must stand upon, and ought

to be made the starting-point of the labors of the educational union.

There is hardly a neighborhood where two or three individuals could not be found who have suffered themselves, in their own families or among their immediate friends, from the present condition of education, its methods and results. These ought to unite in the first instance. If they know what they are about and what ought to be done, the beneficent result of such a union of endeavors will soon attract others to associate with the union.

There ought to be meetings not less frequent than once a week, for this is the most important public business that can concern any man. New events and subjects demanding the attention of the union will offer every week; and it will not only be useful, but essential, never to delay agreeing upon the common objects to be pursued, and to immediately carry them out by joint endeavors as far as circumstances permit for the time.

The permanent objects of the unions ought to be the following :—

1. Means of instruction should be provided, teaching the general requirements of the education of infancy, childhood, and youth, and pointing out the ways and means to satisfy these requirements.

2. Instruction upon the general requirements must be supplemented by reference to the particular local requirements of education, and to the ways and means actually available for their satisfaction.

3. Defects of the local means must be pointed out and discussed in a free exchange of views, of advice, and instruction, obtained from our own experience and

that of others as well as from study and the directions of practical educators.

4. The knowledge obtained must be used for the purpose of finding out the ways and means to remove the defects of any and all educational institutions within cognizance. Every member of the union must be obliged to lend a hand in the practical work of carrying out whatever may be considered necessary to improve education.

5. The improvements of education ought to begin in the home circle, starting with the groundwork necessary for every education, namely, the careful development of children previous to their reception into the public school.

6. When Kindergarten training is not within reach, the union ought to devise means for procuring the necessary help for the introduction of such training into the family circle or otherwise.

7. It would evidently require more wealth than is possessed by the majority of people to provide Kindergarten training within the family, unless, as is but rarely the case, the mother is able to give it herself. But the united action of an educational union might be found equal to the task. At any rate, there is no other way than union by which education can be made what it ought to be, and can ripen those blessed fruits which otherwise can never be matured. What cannot be accomplished by the isolated individual may, in some way or other, be carried out as a problem of general co-operation, to be solved by and for all the people.

Even if the unions were, for a time, to confine themselves to the groundwork of education, which is Kin-

dergarten training within the family, the results obtained would be great and of striking beneficence. They would show themselves, first, in the domestic circle, the family, and among the children. Thence they would soon spread to public life, first showing fruits in the life and intercourse of youths, of girls and boys, young ladies and gentlemen; whence they would reach out into social and civil life, proving that education properly handled is the most important concern of life, the most powerful means for the moral, the civil, and the political development of the nation.

Under the influence of the unions a more thoughtful system of education will gradually develop, and a great many defects of domestic and public education will disappear; childhood and youth will be relieved of the incubus now weighing it down and curtailing its full natural development, and our unselfish endeavors to benefit childhood will have brought to the whole world lasting fruits of salvation.

By the same means, a system of education worthy of the people, and embracing not only the public school, but all education, domestic and public, elementary and college schools, may in time develop; by which all that is great and noble in man will be cultivated among us, and a perfection hitherto unknown, of all the people and of each individual, will be achieved.⁶

DISCUSSION BY VILLAGERS.

LETTER 2.—FROEBEL TO VON ARNSWALD.

KEILHAU, Feb. 17, 1845.

MY DEAR HERMANN:—The success of our endeavors in every direction depends greatly upon conditions and public opinion. That is why I am going to send you information upon some facts which have transpired here in reference to the Educational Union; for such knowledge may assist you in the steps you are taking for the purpose of awakening an interest in the matter at the city of Eisenach.

Our pastor, who approved my plan from the start, obtained the co-operation of some more people whom we met last Friday at the pastor's residence at Eichfeld. The villagers present displayed so much of clear thought and insight, and of firm good-will, that I was greatly rejoiced. Since then quite a number of other inhabitants of our valley have promised their co-operation, and will be present at next Friday's meeting, when I shall state the task before us and the end to be held in view.

Another pastor sent word from Rudolstadt promising me the establishment of an Educational Union there, immediately after the publication of my invitation, which will be made within a week.

The invitation has already been printed in the “*Didakalia*”* at Frankfort-on-Main. That paper submits the idea to the public scrutiny of an extensive circle of readers whose interest and criticism have already evolved some lively discussion in that city.⁷

I also subjoin an extract from a letter upon my edu-

* A periodical devoted to miscellaneous information.

cational principles, printed in the *Allgemeiner Anzeiger der Deutschen* [“Public Advertiser of the Germans”] of February 12, 1845.

Yours, etc.,

F. FROEBEL.

The extract is as follows:—

“ You recommend Froebel's Institutes as the best guaranties of a successful education, and I am glad to see you take a practical interest in the instructive enterprises of the aspiring man. I was at his place myself, and the enthusiastic educator made me acquainted with the ends of his labors and the arrangements he has made at Blankenburg and Keilhau for the realization of his purposes. I believe that it would be a mistake to consider his system as in opposition to our public-school system. The Kindergarten is intended to prepare for the public school and to assist it. By means of live games and a gradual unfolding of the natural activity, the system strives during the years preceding school age to arouse the higher consciousness of the child and develop it. This will furnish to the pupil of the public school a rich store of interests and activities for filling his intervals between lessons and his spare times in general, with occupations calculated to cultivate the mind and bring enjoyment. In mathematics, for example, Froebel labors to arouse the sense of form and number at an early age. He has invented means and forms for showing, rather than abstractly teaching, mathematical relations, and these forms are practical and ingenious, and artistically beautiful enough to be admired even by artists. These forms awaken and develop the faculty of perceiving positive

arithmetical truths, and of sketching figures clearly representing important relations of size and form,—faculties which will help to remove every difficulty of stating and demonstrating theorems in language. But to make the system truly and thoroughly effective, it is necessary chiefly in places where Kindergartens have not yet been established, that the family, more prominently parents and relatives, should join the teachers, and that, above all, mothers, and women in general, should contribute their experience and help by careful supervision and quickening guidance at home and within the family. By such a harmonious co-operation of the home with the school in all classes and disciplines, the religious sentiments and doctrines could be implanted in the rising generation in a more sympathetic and yet a profounder manner, proving the word of the poet,—

“To the science of good, though the wise may be blind,
Yet the practice is plain for the childlike mind.”⁸

LETTER 3.—FROEBEL TO VON ARNSWALD.

KEILHAU, May 30, 1845.

You ask, what the intention of the Educational Union is, and what foundation they have to rest upon.

The purpose of the Union is to accustom men to co-operate with each other in a conscious and mutually profitable manner. Such a custom is best started in infancy, of course, but, if neglected at the proper time, it may still be produced at any subsequent time. Man should develop in harmony, peace, and joy, within himself and with those around him, in accordance with human nature and destiny; and this should continue

through all stages of development, and in all the various circumstances of life, in the family and school, in domestic and public life. Such a method must act in every direction, and be in harmony with the present stage of the development of mankind.

The above purpose is founded upon the following convictions: (1) As the destiny of a man is expressed in his being, so his conscience recognizes the idea of the harmony between the human mind and the world around him, and endeavors to realize this harmony at every stage of development.⁹

(2) The harmony, its conception, and the endeavor to realize it, has its source in the origin of all things, in God the Creator and Father of men. This conviction we must obtain in order to be able to act independently, that is, in freedom.

(3) This harmony is objectively represented in nature, which demonstrates it clearly and openly.

(4) It is just as clearly shown in whatever has happened to the human race in its mental and social evolution, in the religious history of the individual as in that of all mankind. This knowledge can be best inculcated by developing the inner sense of man.

For these reasons the office of education, of educators and pupils, and also of the educational unions, consists above all in helping everybody to observe his own life,¹⁰ and to act it out according to his being and its demands. In such a life the personality is purified and viewed in the mirror of the experiences of others, as in the reasonable lives of individual man and mankind, in the mirror of nature, of history, and of revelation.

FRIEDRICH FROEBEL.

NOTES

CONFORMITY TO NATURE.

' WE are pupils of experience, and as our education progresses in the school of Nature, says Froebel, we grow more and more conscious of the fact, and learn to conform to it. In the same way, continues Froebel, we ought to conform to Nature in our attempts at educating others : or, conformity to Nature is the end, and ought to be the conscious aim of education.

If that be so, are not animals or savages the best educated creatures? They are not; and for the reason that there are two ways of conforming to nature, namely, first, that of submission to nature, and secondly, that of compelling nature to submit to us. The animal and the savage will conform to Nature by unconditional submission ; while self-conscious man, by understanding Nature and rendering her forces subservient to his wants, forces her to submit to his intelligence. The latter conformity is superior to the former. In fact, it is this conformity between man and Nature, or the dominion of man over Nature, which characterizes true humanity. It is this conscious conformity to Nature which Froebel describes as the "full harmony with the educator of the world and of mankind," which is to constitute the basis of "our attempts at educating our surroundings."

* The ultimate aim of all education here stated by Froebel, namely, the due development of the body, the purity and strength of the character, and firmness of will, is the same as that demanded by every kind of educational theory, and commonly expressed in the old adage of "a sound mind in a sound body,"—where the "sound mind" is understood to include the ethical will and the unity of volition and action.

In order to mark a difference between Froebel and other educators, I would suggest that Froebel, if he had invented the above adage, would probably have said "a sound mind *through* a sound body."

It follows from the words of Froebel to which this note applies, that he agrees with the rest of educators so far as the ultimate end of education is concerned. But he differs with them in the road or method by which he proposes to reach the end. Here is the difference in a nutshell: Common educational science labors to raise practical ability upon a foundation of intellectual knowledge. But Froebel labors to make knowledge grow out of practical ability. Develop senses and muscles by manual training, he says, in order to inculcate sense, will, and knowledge.

The system of Froebel must abhor the mathematical method of holding up before the pupil's eye and consciousness, when he starts on his way to cognition, the knowledge which he is intended to reach at the end of the way. Mathematics does so by stating a theorem or proposition, and then proceeding to prove it. The proposition is a beacon intended to guide the pupil in his efforts to reach the goal. He sees it, but he does not understand it. The light is altogether too powerful

for his young power of sight. And although after wading through the demonstration, he may learn to say "*quod erat demonstrandum*" with a belief of knowing something, in nine cases out of ten he has no comprehension of what it is that he thinks he knows how to demonstrate. It was on account of this unnatural method that Hegel is reported to have pronounced mathematics an absurd discipline, and that Robert Lowe once said that mathematics made people credulous and superstitious ; that is, unable to distinguish between fact and phrase.

Froebel wants mathematics taught by leading the pupil step by step from one practical construction to another, until the proposition to be taught appears as a natural step in a series of natural developments. After a proposition has thus been evolved and practically understood as a fact, it may then be demonstrated in the common theoretical way of Euclid's system, and be fully understood by the pupil whose ability of logical deduction will then be greatly improved by it. It is true, Froebel did not leave us a course of geometry, or any other branch of mathematics sufficiently elaborated according to his principle, to be of service in the elementary school, but he clearly explained his fundamental idea of it. Some useful treatises on such a Froebelian system on evolutionary principles have been published ; e.g., I. C. Hug, "Mathematics of the Lower School," Zürich, 1854. E. Zizman, "System of Geometrical Forms," Jena, 1852. Dr. F. A. W. Diesterweg, "Lessons on Form," Leipzig 1845.

As man's knowledge and science never precede

experience but are always secondary to it,—knowledge always growing out of, or following upon experience,—so in the child experience precedes knowledge, as the intellect is secondary to sensation. That is why Froebel wants to educate the mind by the activity of the senses and the muscles, chiefly the hand. The present school education intends to inculcate a deal of knowledge which the pupils are neither expected nor prepared to learn by their own experience; i.e., by the activity of their own senses and muscles. That is why they hardly ever succeed in making this knowledge their own, although their memories may retain it; it hangs upon their mind as a mantle will hang on the body; though owned, it is not a part of the body. Froebel's education, on the contrary, appeals from the first start to the working energy of the child by exciting its spontaneous activity. By causing the individual faculties and powers to manifest themselves, the method discovers the natural talents, and by practising them, teaches the child how to control them.

Psychology teaches that all our knowledge is the result of experience. Our knowledge of the world is the result of sensation and perception of objective things and events; our consciousness of our own powers is the result of experiencing our own actions. It is through perception and action, that is, through spontaneous activity that all education must begin, that the first elements of knowledge ought to be imparted to the child. The course, according to Froebel, may be said to pass through five stages as follows.

In the first stage the senses must be practised. The greatest attention must be devoted to the sense of touch. The education of this stage is given to the baby in the mother's arms during the first year of life.

In the second stage the activity of the child is to be directed and developed. The infant is active from the impulse to prove by the sense of touch the impressions received by the eye and ear. This tendency is commonly called curiosity, or the desire of knowledge. The educator must direct the infantile activity in a manner to connect the perceptions gained with the nearest, the simplest, and most direct cause and effect, without attempting to inculcate remote connections of causality, or ultimate principles ; that is, to say, you are to confine yourself to naming the facts, but refrain from much preaching. This is the education of the nursery, and usually extends over the second and third years of life, occasionally taking in the fourth or even the fifth year.

The third stage is that of the Kindergarten proper. It ought to be a continuation and a more comprehensive evolution of the activity of the second stage. The impulse to action is now more powerful than the want to extend the sensations of touch. The child wants to externalize its powers. This want is at first fully satisfied by imitating the actions of others. This object is served by the games and occupations. Imitation must be guided so as to achieve correct results, but with a look to the spontaneous action of the imagination, which must find food in the acts of imitation. This stage ought not to be entirely devoted to the imitative

and creative activities, but memory must receive a share of attention. Memorizing little pieces of poetry and prose will be found of exceeding advantage to the little ones. The Kindergarten, as it is at present, is hardly suitable for children above seven.

The fourth stage is that of the elementary and grammar schools. Knowledge of an abstract kind is growing more important, and certain mechanical abilities must be acquired. Manual activity is still of the utmost importance, but its extent diminishes as the pupil advances in age. Object-lessons ought to be handled in a way to give the pupils occasions for manual action: forming, construction, and drawing must occupy a good deal of time.

The fifth stage comprehends every kind of higher education. Knowledge and ability now appear separated, but only theoretically; practically, the ability to do always remains the proper test of the full assimilation of knowledge. In this way knowledge will become the basis upon which stands the conscious ability to do; or, sound knowledge will produce a will leading with certainty to action. The more comprehensive and profound the knowledge is, the more secure will be its control of the will and conduct.

In a scheme of education like the above, action or ability manifested will not only be the beginning and the end, but also the guiding method of education. There is no other method so well adapted to accomplish this end as that of Froebel. True, the method is not yet perfect, and the difficulty to introduce it into the higher stages of education is very great. But the

principle is broad, as it demands to educate the child in accordance with the educational methods of nature. And we may be sure that a careful and diligent study of the nature of childhood will in time point out a way to apply the method to the entire problem of the education of man.

⁸ Froebel's enthusiasm has carried him a little too far, it seems, in this estimate he makes of people in general. Thoroughness, in the first place, is an attribute not so easy of acquisition by the uneducated as Froebel supposes. And even if a man has a thorough knowledge of his business and the duties devolving on him as a man of business, he is not for that reason able to educate his children properly. It would not be wise, it seems, to persuade everybody that he or she is fully capable of educating their little family properly. Let them feel that they are deficient in their educational capacities, and they will not only be disposed to look elsewhere for instruction and help on the subject, but also be the sooner convinced of the universal need of education.

⁴ Froebel was of a devout disposition, and always loved to interest the clergy in his work. The fact that the father of Froebel was a clergyman, in whom he had learned to hold the whole clergy in very high esteem, was probably the reason why he thought he had won a great deal when he had succeeded in interesting a pastor in his plans. And if we take the fact into account, that the education of the people in the highest sense of the word is, or ought to be, the very field and proper occupation of the clergy, it is evident that it was but natural to strive for their co-operation.

⁶ Froebel held woman in high esteem, and considered education the vocation *par excellence* to which woman ought to devote her energy. But when he penned this "Invitation to Fathers," woman had not yet demonstrated her capacity for public agitation, or advanced her claim to sit in the councils of men. He could not forestal the future by assigning to woman an occupation which had until that time been the exclusive prerogative of man. That is why he called upon the *fathers* to discuss and provide for the spread of education, but proclaimed that woman ought to be the practical educator.

Froebel's experience as a teacher had convinced him that the unsatisfactory results of the present school education were produced to a greater extent by the deficiencies of the education preceding school-life than by the methods employed in the school itself. He had tried for many years to reform and improve upon the latter, but had never succeeded to his own satisfaction. So he had found, he thought, that the defects in the development of the minds of his pupils were caused by their having been erroneously educated before they came to his school. He, therefore, turned his back upon the school, and considered how to educate children previous to sending them to school. On this road he discovered the Kindergarten.

But if the Kindergarten is to be a thorough cure of whatever ails education, it ought to be in harmony with the school and the home, and both the school and the home must be managed on principles that are in full agreement with those of the Kindergarten. How can

such a harmony be brought about? That is the great question which is now demanding solution.

Froebel could not hope to win the co-operation of the public school. The German schools are government institutions, and governments are not in the habit of adopting reforms unless compelled to accept them. After a reform or a new system has proved its power of life, that is, after it has become a success, governments may accept it, but not before. Froebel knew that he had no chance in that direction. So he turned to the people, and proposed the general educational unions. He did not live to see them established. But his disciples took up the idea, and established "General Educational Unions" in many places after his death.

The purpose of these unions, according to Froebel, was: 1st, Discussion of educational matters among people of all classes and of every degree of scholarship, must enlighten them upon the general results to be expected of school and home education; and more particularly upon the local educational needs.

2d, Discussion within the union must impart a knowledge of the shortcomings of the educational institutions of a neighborhood, so that everybody may see the points at which the local institutions fail to satisfy the expectations which the people at large are entitled to have.

3d, Means to realize just expectations are to be devised by the union, and after the proper means have been discovered, the united action of all the members of the union must enforce them. Very few schools and teachers, families and parents there are, that could

long resist a pressure exercised by a large union of public-spirited citizens.

4th, The greatest attention is to be devoted to the education of childhood under school age. Where institutions for this education are lacking, the union must provide them. Where there are such institutions, the union must make it their particular business to see that they are well conducted. The parents themselves, chiefly the mothers, must be taught the importance of this method of education, and must learn how to manage it in their homes.

What a man does not know, he does not desire to have. So it is with education: a man must know what education is, in order to feel a great desire for it. At the time of Froebel, the common people understood too little of education to have a great desire for it. For that reason he proposed to establish the educational unions, where the value of education should be taught by discussing it, in order to give to the people a greater desire to educate their children properly.

As it was in Germany at the time when Froebel wrote this invitation, and as it may be there yet, so it is to a great extent in this country at present. The public school system of the land was established by men of superior parts, who were able and willing to accord to education their full appreciation. But the great masses of the people do not know enough of education to have a great desire for it, as is shown by the present need of compulsory education laws. If the people desired education, there would be no need of compelling them to send their children to school.

This absence of a strong desire for education indi-

cates that educational unions similar to those proposed by Froebel are as much needed in this country as they were at the time of Froebel in Germany. In every school district there ought to be such a union for the purpose of discussing the value and the needs of education, in order to enlighten the inhabitants upon the subject ; and further, after the needs and defects of the local homes and educational institutions have been recognized and remedies been pointed out, to labor for the adoption of these remedies with a uniform purpose and united strength.

⁷ This letter shows how active Froebel was in the propagation of his ideas and method, and that the smallest successes filled him with great expectations. But his hopes were rarely fulfilled. Although general educational unions were started at a few places for the support of the Froebel system, they did not do any noticeable work while Froebel was among the living, and he hardly ever mentioned them again during the last years of his life.

⁸ This estimate of the work of Froebel printed in the "Allgemeiner Anzeiger der Deutschen" is more benevolent than correct. It looks upon the Kindergarten method as perfect, which, if it were, would justify the conclusion that it was not in opposition to the common school system. But at the time when the above estimate was made, the Kindergarten method was less perfect than it is now ; and even now it is hardly far enough developed to be available in the common school. It is a move in the right direction, but it has not yet gone far enough to enable teachers of higher schools to steadily continue in the right path. That is

why common school teachers are seldom able to take the Froebel method for a permanent guide in the classroom. A great deal, however, has already been achieved since the great principles of the method have become known, and the teachers strive here and there to act in agreement with them.

The Froebel method assists the free development of every individual force. It will guide and protect by inciting to action and directing it. Its great office is to observe, watch, guide, and purify individual action. The games and occupations serve to incite, exercise, and strengthen. But the means of incitement ought not to put upon the individual anything foreign or beyond his capacity. The idiosyncrasies of every individual must be respected and provided with the best conditions for their free and complete development.

The common school teacher too often expects all his pupils to think like himself, and will mark as wrong whatever differs from his views. He has explained — or possibly not explained — his own opinions, and pronounces every other view a mistake, because — well, because he is not able to understand any other ideas but his own. Thus the children have to suffer in their moral sense of right and in their intellectual development through the incapacity of their instructor.

But is it not more frequently the entire system of the common school that compels the teacher to make such mistakes? The school authorities make certain rules for the education of all the children attending the common schools; no attention is paid to individual pecu-

liarities or local requirements. A certain quantity of matter is ordered to be taught in a certain time, no matter whether the average capacity of the classes of the year is good, bad, or medium. Even the school-books are selected by the Boards, no matter whether the books agree with, or run directly counter to, the capacities and methods of the teachers. Such uniform regulations from above destroy the individuality of teachers and of pupils at the same time. Under such a government there is no room for Froebel principles.

This system of prescribing methods cannot but end in automatism in the schoolroom. It is more desirable that every teacher should have a distinctly pronounced individuality, and should have been trained to recognize and foster the individuality of every pupil under his charge. That is what Froebel demands of every disciple of his, since a teacher is utterly unable to carry out the principles of the master unless he can reproduce them in his own way.

It is a common complaint that children who have passed through a Kindergarten do not, by any means, make the best pupils of the common school. They have been trained to comprehend in the natural way, that is, by means of their senses and of their muscular activity. In the public school no appeal is made either to their senses or their creative power, but almost exclusively to memory. Therefore, they will lag behind all such as have a good memory—a memory which has not been left behind in the development of their productive energies. In order to bring about a change, both the public school and the Kindergarten must

modify their methods. Object-lessons and manual activities must enter into every branch of the instruction given in the public school, and the Kindergarten must begin to pay considerable attention to the development of the memory. If these things are done, it will be easier to assign to the Kindergarten a place in the public school system.

⁹ The deeper Froebel dives into the ultimate causes of things, the more difficult it is to keep pace with his ideas. Thus it is with the expression "the harmony between the human mind and the world around him." What Froebel meant to say by it, was made clear to my mind by an extract from a letter written by Barop to Froebel, on April 26, 1845. Barop says : "Everybody is interested in education. Every man's consciousness contains the conditions and demands of education. That is just why an agreement among all men, a joint activity alone can truly and completely realize it. The mutual influences which the educational unions produce, will establish a community of interest between parents and teachers, between teachers and the united body of parents, and between all these elements and the whole of childhood ; and in this way alone a complete and satisfactory educational result will be obtained."

This sentiment of Barop's Froebel had read about a month before he wrote the letter to which this note refers. On the sheet of paper upon which Froebel had transcribed these words from Barop's letter were several scraps of Froebel's handwriting, showing that he was attempting to change the phrases and give to the sentiment a wording expressive of the manner in which

it had affected Froebel's mind. He had evidently thought a great deal about it, and at last found the form to which this note refers. Froebel's "world around the man" I consequently identify with Barop's "parents and teachers." In a similar way I generally manage to penetrate the meaning of Froebel's sentences by substituting real things for his abstract generalities.

¹⁰ Froebel was uncommonly great in what he loves to call "Selbstbeachtung" (self-observation). His autobiographical sketches are full of descriptions of his own inner life, his feeling and thinking; and it is likely that his study of self assisted him greatly in obtaining his profound insight into the conditions of the psychological evolution of the infant, the child, and youth. Nevertheless, there can be hardly a doubt that his educational genius was a natural gift. Before he had ever thought of being a teacher, Gottlieb Anton Gruner gave him a class to teach, and was greatly astonished at the remarkable educational talent he displayed in the first lesson he ever gave. He was what his widow likes to call a "teacher by the grace of God."

Froebel's principle of self-observation is the same as the old Delphic injunction, "Know thyself!" It is a good principle, but few there are that can live up to it. Goethe says: "Within himself nobody will learn to know himself, for there he will use a measure of his own make which is now too small and now too large. A man never knows himself except in other men. Life alone will teach a man what he is." But even this rule does not hold good except with men of unusually great

powers like Goethe. Men of mediocre gifts hardly ever learn to know their own selves. Nevertheless, self-observation is highly commendable, and, if duly practised, would in the end lead men to really know themselves.



FROEBEL'S SCHOOL AT KEILHAU.

CHAPTER II

SCHEMES AND PROPOSALS FOR FOUNDING KINDERGARTENS, A NORMAL SCHOOL, AND AN ORPHAN ASYLUM.

LETTER 4.—VON ARNSWALD TO FROEBEL.

SAND FOR MOULDING SHAPES.

EISENACH, May 13, 1847.

DEAR, FATHERLY FRIEND : Yesterday I was engaged in studying your Sunday paper when an idea struck me which I feel prompted to communicate to you. I thought, might not a plane of sand be made a useful and entertaining game? By a plane of sand I mean a low, shallow box of wood filled with pure sand. It would be a Kindergarten in miniature. The children might play in it with their cubes and building-blocks. I think it would give the child particular pleasure to have the forms and figures and sticks laid out in the sand before its eyes. Sand is a material adaptable to any use. A few drops of water mixed with it would enable the child to form mountains and valleys in it, and so on.¹¹

I have good news for you to-day. I found a true children's friend, a well-educated young man devoted

¹¹ See notes at end of chapter.

to the calling of educator with heart and soul. He was head master of a Swiss school, and is at present in a similar position at a girls' school. His name is Dr. Mai. He is enthusiastically in favor of your plan of founding a General Educational Union. He will surely go to see you, in summer, if not before. He will also labor for establishing a school for little children, and connect with it a normal school for nurses according to your plan.¹²

I have also seen Mr. Kapp. He knows your system already, and would be very glad to quit his position at the public school, in order to devote himself to your mode of education to the full extent of his power.

There is here already a "Ladies' Association," where young girls are taught domestic occupations. There is a so-called *crèche* for little children. It ought not to be very difficult to unite the two institutions in one after your design.

HERMANN VON ARNSWALD.

LETTER 5.—FROEBEL TO VON ARNSWALD.

KEILHAU, June, 1847.

MY DEAR HERMANN—Your report concerning Mr. Kapp has afforded me great pleasure. He would be glad to resign his position of public-school teacher, you say, in order to devote his full strength to the Kindergarten. I feel sure he will never repent of his resolve, as I never yet found anybody who had repented of the resolve to devote himself (or herself) to this method of educating children, according to the laws of life and development. For whoever will do so deliber-

ately and with a devoted soul, will realize a gain double or many times his stake by receiving his own self back as a perfect whole.¹³

Concerning educational institutions for children's maids, I would say that I should have had one going long ago but for the obstacles offered by society in general, the greatest of which is the low esteem in which such maids are held. Even after having graduated from such an institution, a girl will prefer a situation as cook or house-maid to that of nursery maid, because the former are esteemed so much higher and paid so much better, that accepting a place with children would be considered a drop in position.

If you have not seen such cases, you will never believe them possible. But here they are, first, among the servants themselves, who look upon their period of nursery time as their novitiate of service, to be shortened as much as possible. This contempt felt by the servants themselves, is the natural consequence of the second factor in the dilemma, which is the disrespect with which mothers will treat their children's maids. Not until this erroneous conduct on the part of the mothers has undergone a complete change, is there any possibility of improvement in the training of little children intrusted to maids.

If mothers knew the importance of proper education during the first years of the lives of their children, they would surely be the first to demand that their nursery maids should have the necessary educational qualifications, and would never be behindhand in esteeming and treating the maids accordingly. It is a matter of course that nursery maids should not hold a position subordi-

nate to that of any other household servant, as they generally do, for so long as this estimate determines the relative positions of the servants, no change for the better can be expected either in the maids or in their little wards.

There is little hope for improvement until the mothers will begin to educate their own selves. Let them attend Kindergartens and study the system themselves. Then they will grow able to know what to expect of their maids and how to judge of their capacities. Such attendance and study ought also to be enjoined upon young ladies of every rank of society, who ought to thoroughly educate themselves in order to be equipped for their future task of educating their children.

There will surely be no progress in our cause, nor, in fact, in any line, unless this condition is fulfilled. For every progress depends on that of education ; and no education, least of all that of infancy, can get along without the active co-operation of mothers who ought to have a full comprehension of their true natural calling, the care of childhood. But they are not as yet acquainted even with the preliminaries of the education of man, which ignorance causes them to expect that the official educators of youth should make good again what they, the mothers, have spoiled.

This evil we have to overcome, and I know of no other means so thorough and certain to effect this purpose as the Kindergarten. Let young women go there and see the development of child-life going on before their eyes, noticing and understanding the laws and workings of it.¹⁴ Yours, etc.,

FRIEDRICH FROEBEL.

LETTER 6.—FROEBEL TO VON ARNSWALD.

BRUNSWICK, Aug. 21, 1847.

I was at Marienberg where the eighth Kindergarten was opened. It is a foundation by private people, and was called "Luther Kindergarten." From there I went to the village of Quetz on a visit to my friend and the children's friend, pastor Hildenhagen, where I was busy making preparations for a festival for little children and youths, that is, for the people. It came off as proposed, and was a decided success. Our Middendorff gave me the pleasure of being present with Carl Froebel, my nephew.

From Quetz I hastened to Magdeburg and here. I shall go on to Hanover and Bremen, and on my way home intend to see you at Eisenach.

A description of the Quetz festival to be published in the *Allg. Anz. d. D.* I shall mail to you.

FRIEDRICH FROEBEL.

Description of the Children's Festival at Quetz.

On July 25th an attractive children's festival was celebrated in the village of Quetz, near Zoerbig (near Halle in Prussia). Pastor Hildenhagen is never weary to work for the education of youth. He has founded a Kindergarten for such as are not old enough to go to the public school, and a young people's school for those who have passed through the public school, both of which institutions are exceedingly useful.¹⁵ After the completion of extensive improvements made at the parish church, the sacred edifice was newly dedicated

on July 25th. In connection with this celebration a children's festival had been prepared, at which Friedrich Froebel, the originator of the Kindergarten, was himself present and conducted the games. There was great variety and constant change, all the children playing together at one time, or a select number carrying out another game; now girls and boys separated in groups, now all of them united in the same performance; and everything went off with an astonishing order and unexpected skill. The old and the young, and young and old, all felt the inciting influence of the exercises full of interest and joyful harmony, as they witnessed how every detail emanated from and reflected upon a common centre; watching the well-adapted changes from rest to cheerful motion and *vice versa*; the prevalence of an irreproachable order; the singing of many charming songs accompanying and describing the games. All this created a lively interest in the festival with all the adults of all classes that had met to witness this remarkable display of the genuine humane feeling that lives in all the classes and strata of the people, and which is destined to be essentially strengthened and developed by the Kindergartens.

LETTER 7. — FROEBEL TO A CLERGYMAN.

KEILHAU, Sept., 1847.

*To Councillor of the Consistory :
Deacon of — at Eisenach.*

RIGHT REVEREND SIR, — You have turned your serious attention to the idea of an early and gradual evolution of the education of childhood, and to the ways and

means for a well-adapted primary training of children and men. So it has not escaped your attention that the Kindergartens, in their exhaustive connection with the life and thought of the world, are the best means for the successful propagation and unfolding of the Reformation.¹⁶ In this conviction you said you considered it your interest to help us in our plan to establish such an institution at Eisenach under the name of "Luther Kindergarten," in commemoration of the great work which Martin Luther achieved in the advancement of the education of the people.¹⁷

I rejoice greatly over this your thoughtful appreciation of the far-reaching value of this system of education as a foundation of true human culture. It does really take up and cultivate everything by which a Christian education according to Luther should promote a true progress of the Reformation. Such progress will be found in the training and culture of the individual life of a child as part and member of the life of all.

Such a general culture can only be attained by an education based on a constant attention to the mental evolution of the individual, and of mankind as the manifestation, or revelation, of the Divine in the life of man. This requires giving attention to emotions, to thought and action, to the creative power of childhood, and their laws and conditions.

An examination of these features of the evolutionary method of the education of man, chiefly of the Kindergarten system, will induce you to approve of my idea, that a continuation of the work of the Reformation will be found in the general establishment of Kindergartens. For this system is a general development of the human

mind, as the Protestant principle is a development of the religious sentiment in that profound and eternal truth in which Luther himself found his inspiration.

Knowledge makes free, but it must be the right kind of knowledge. This system of education will make men free and able to realize the freedom of thought of the Reformation. You cannot serve your religious calling better than by assisting this scheme of founding this "Luther Kindergarten" in Eisenach at the foot of the Wartburg where Luther made the word of the Lord, this most important basis of the Reformation, ready for us in our own language.¹⁸ Let this source of new intellectual life, this fountain of a developing education of man be established there, and the Wartburg will cease to be nothing but a historical relic, a lifeless German castle, but will be resuscitated to new life and again become the starting-point of the reformatory progress of the German mind.

FRIEDRICH FROEBEL.

LETTER 8.—VON ARNSWALD TO FROEBEL.¹⁹

EISENACH, Sept. 20, 1847.

MY DEAREST PATERNAL FRIEND,—I am constantly thinking of the establishment of our Kindergarten. But I am afraid your addition "in the spirit of Luther" will be an obstacle. Why should the name of Luther be requisite for the success of the holy cause of the training of childhood?

It is highly interesting to notice how clear Luther's views were on the subject of education, how he felt instinctively that its action was to bring a new heaven on

earth. But as regards the Kindergarten — does it not belong to all mankind? It is generous on your part to suppress every vainglorious feeling, and to be content to have another name than yours connected with the new institution; and it is also in accordance with the Christian faith that you consider yourself nothing but a tool in the hand of God. But the Kindergarten is, and will continue to be, an issue of the spiritual nature of man that was consolidated into shape and form by you for the benefit of the whole of mankind.

Are you not a second Columbus, a discoverer of a new world within the boundaries of the Old World? But look here, within this Old World there live Jews and Roman Catholics and other believers. Will they be satisfied to establish Kindergartens "in the spirit of Luther"?

HERMANN VON ARNSWALD.

LETTER 9.—FROEBEL TO VON ARNSWALD.

KEILHAU, Sept., 1847.

I know the Kindergartens are to be institutions for the educational development of whatever is called a child in a purely human sense, independent of every side issue. I never conceived them otherwise. And that is why I wished to see them established under all conditions wherever children are born and may be conducted to a purely human development.

Speaking of a "Luther-Kindergarten" I did not intend to keep children in it apart from any other denominations. On the contrary, I should consider it in the exact spirit of Christianity to make no distinctions

whatever. It would be in contradiction to all my past activity to think of excluding Jews: at Frankfurt-on-Main, for instance, I helped establish a Jewish Kindergarten before a Christian Kindergarten was thought of.

I go farther than this. I want to educate children for a life of purely human love. But this love depends in every case, though not always with sufficient consciousness, upon the recognition of the divine in human nature. Thus, true human love and real Christian love are identical. By Christian love I want to signify that love which is conscious of its origin as just named, i.e., the divine life in man which is the human soul or the human spirit.

Let your establishment, then, be called Kindergarten only. Any qualification is evil if it stands in the way of the advancement of the cause.

FRIEDRICH FROEBEL.

LETTER 10.—FROEBEL TO VON ARNSWALD.

KEILHAU, Oct. 30, 1847.

MY HIGHLY ESTEEMED FRIEND,—Your reports upon the continuous development of your dear baby give me great joy. The steadier you are in your attention to her development, the more uniform your care for her continues, the more genuine will be the joys with which her unfoldment will bless you. I am experiencing much joy at present with little Reinhold Barop, now twenty-three weeks old, who frequently comes with his nurse to see me. Then I attend to him in order to be taught by him. It is truly touching and delightful

to watch how steadily the senses and limbs develop upon the ball, through form, color, and motion ; and how, above all, rhythmical movements of his arms, united to word and sound, give him pleasure. The little man is unconsciously adding to my sympathetic pleasure at the joy which your own little one gives you. Your educational notes are altogether instructive and interesting to me, and I request you to continue them : be sure that nothing of it shall be lost.²⁰ The little girl of a neighbor of mine is supplying me with daily demonstrations that song is an essential part of child-life, for she never wearies, all day long, to repeat her few cadences.²¹ Let me urge on you to foster every breath of song in your family ; children's song is to the family what the song of birds is to the leafy grove.

I enclose my draft of a prospectus of my institution for the education of Kindergarteners, [Kinderpflegerinnen, says Froebel], requesting you and your good lady to look it over.²² I know that my style is not readily intelligible to all, so I would ask you to criticise it freely and return the corrected copy.²³

FRIEDRICH FROEBEL.

PROSPECTUS OF AN INSTITUTION FOR THE TRAINING
OF NURSES AND EDUCATORS OF CHILDREN, AS PRO-
POSED BY FRIEDRICH FROEBEL.

The institution intends to render generally accessible an education in agreement with the nature of the child and of man, and satisfying the demands of the age, and to show how such an education can be carried

out in the family. This can only be done by preparing young ladies for the business of nursing, developing and educating a child from its birth until it can go to school. The course will also qualify its pupils to prepare children for the first grade of the elementary course of the public school. The pupils of the institution will be duly qualified to manage all the educational labors of the house, the school and life, by developing the child as an individual personality, and as a member of all mankind as well.

Education in the family isolates the child, but education at school, in the society of many children, causes the child to feel himself a member of human society. The institution ought to prepare its pupils to fill positions in either employment.

This is accomplished readily, because family and school education do not differ in the nature of the knowledge required, but only as regards the quantity of personal accomplishments to be acquired. The different grades must, therefore, be assigned different branches but not different kinds of instruction.

The grades of child-servants, or child-attendants, both of whom I had rather call child-nurses (see note 22), want chiefly practical exercises by which to acquire the details of the system and their application, according to the age and ability of the child and the domestic surroundings. The grades of child-guides (Kindergarteners) need an insight into the whole system and a comprehensive knowledge of its principles, from which will naturally flow a more intense and spontaneous professional activity. The institution is well prepared to keep both these branches going side by side.

It is very desirable that young ladies entering the institution should have had a good school education. They ought to be upwards of fifteen years old, and to be healthy and full grown. The age from seventeen to twenty odd years seems best for this training. More important than age and school education, however, is the girlish love of childhood, and an ability to occupy herself with children, as well as a serene and joyful view taken of life in general. There ought also to be a love of play and playful occupations, a love and capacity for singing. It goes without saying that purity of intentions and a lovely, womanly disposition are essential requisites. The fuller the educational accomplishments of a lady are, the more rapid and satisfactory will be her progress in the science.

The means at the disposal of those willing to take the course are generally so limited as to compel a curtailment of the time of study to six months. Nothing but inexorable necessity could have enforced such a reduction of time, rendering next to impossible the acquisition of even such knowledge as is absolutely indispensable. Every part of the course must be shortened too much in order to render it possible to reach the end at all. The entire course is made up with a consciousness that the pupils themselves must fill up the gaps in their development by incessant industry and spontaneous labor, to work out and perfect the ideas and principles mentioned in the course. There is no possibility of reaching the goal desired in so short a time unless a pupil will give her whole mind, and give it determinedly and perseveringly, to the study. But I am happy to say that a number of the pupils of the

school have completely reached the goal, so far as the course would allow. But this is not sufficient unless the pupil has also learned to observe and study the phenomena of her own life and activity, and thereby learned how to observe and guide the life and activity of children. In this direction the study of the Kindergartenin ought to be continuous.

A complete preparation for bringing up and educating children ought to make the pupil theoretically and practically conversant with all the requirements of the child concerning its bodily (dietetic) and mental (pedagogic) needs from the cradle to school age. But that is not enough: the normal-school pupil ought also to be enabled to impart a good preparation for the first grade of the elementary classes of the public school. It is not possible, however, to include this branch in a short course of only six months. A second course is necessary to give time enough for the preparation for that kind of teaching. In either case, however, success cannot be complete unless the pupil on entering the normal school is sufficiently prepared as regards her school education, her maturity of character and good judgment. Such efficient preliminary preparation alone will enable the pupil to avail herself of all the suggestions offered during the course, and, after leaving the school, to continue to study, reflect, and labor for the purpose of finishing her own education.

The time-table of daily duties, as explained by Froebel in his prospectus, laid out work for the whole day, from 7 A.M. till bedtime. The hour from 7 to 8 A.M. was devoted to a morning service followed by a lesson

in religion. The lessons attempted to "trace the evolution of religious ideas in the child, and thereby to indicate a method of awakening truly religious sentiments in the little ones." At 9 the regular school-day opened. The hour from 9 to 10 was spent in teaching "the science of the phenomena and laws of the evolution of the child; of the essential nature of the child, and the requirements of his nursing and education."²⁴ During the two hours from 10 to 12, the principles taught theoretically in the hour preceding were practically demonstrated. These demonstrations embrace practical exercises in "personal intercourse, appropriate language in conversing with children, singing with children, accompanying the singing with the appropriate practice of the senses and limbs," etc. The specific relations between these exercises and the unfoldment of the soul-life of the child as an individual and as a member of a social whole, were successively pointed out. The *Mutter und Kose-Lieder* served as a text-book in these lessons.*

The afternoon session commenced at 2 P.M. Till 4 P.M. the gifts for play and occupation were handled. There were several small text-books, all of which are now united in the "Pedagogics of the Kindergarten." Froebel tried at every step to point out and make clear the manifold relations between the occupations with his gifts and the labors of man in contact with the circumstances of nature and events of life.

From 5 to 6 the pupils assisted in the plays and games of the children that convened for the purpose.

* Translation published by Lee & Shepard, Boston, with fac-simile illustrations.

The hour from 6 to 7 was devoted to practising plays, games, and occupations that had been carried out during the day.

After supper the pupils practised whatever they felt they had not completely mastered, and were assisted by Froebel, Frau Froebel, and other helpmates. Altogether, it is a fact that during the six months of the course, Froebel devoted his whole time and energy to his pupils, from seven in the morning until bedtime, never wearying to explain and lecture, to labor and play with them, and all this for a paltry remuneration of half a thaler (about thirty-seven cents) payable by each pupil every week of her attendance. Truly it was not a business speculation, this first normal school for Kindergarteners ; it was the irresistible force of enthusiasm for his great ideal, which was the perfection of mankind by means of his new education, that carried Froebel onward and made his ideas victorious.—(*Editor.*)

LETTER II.—FROEBEL TO VON ARNSWALD.

KEILHAU, Nov. 16, 1847.

MY DEAR HERMANN,—The prospectus which I sent you with my last letter has been much criticised, and will not be published until after a careful rewriting. When finished, it will be printed, in its new shape, in a little pamphlet which Middendorff and I are engaged in writing. It will be entitled “The Kindergartens,”²⁵ which name indicates that it will be a concise exposition of the principles of the whole system.

With this pamphlet is connected the carrying out of a plan which is to be the copestone of my earthly

labors.²⁶ I herewith submit the plan to you, desiring you to examine it and let me have your criticisms.

Simultaneously with the first conception of the Kindergarten, there was present in my mind the idea of an institution for the support and education of orphans. The more I think of it, the greater appears to me the importance of the idea for the success of the whole of my scheme of education. I am even disposed to call it the foundation and corner-stone of everything I propose doing for childhood in the Kindergarten and in the family, and for the training of woman-educators of children.

The central part of this enterprise must be a Kindergarten for the orphans of parents in good circumstances. It would consist of two branches; namely, first, the Kindergarten itself, the first pupils of which would be the orphans above mentioned; the second would be a normal school for the practical training of nurses and educators of children.

But it will be better to leave the discussion of the details to the subjoined draft.

FRIEDRICH FROEBEL.

PROSPECTUS OF THE KINDERGARTEN-FOUNDATION
FOR ORPHANS.

The scheme comprehends the following three distinct parts, or branches :—

i. The institution for the support and education of orphans from the earliest age until (for the beginning,) to the sixth or seventh year. It is intended to be a model educational institution for children of this earliest

age, and will form the "central institute," from which the two other institutes will branch off, as follows:—

2. A Kindergarten as a model institution. It would be managed after the fashion of the German Kindergarten founded in 1840.²⁷

3. A Normal Institute for children's nurses, assistant educators, full educators, and Kindergartners.

These three branches would constitute one organic whole, and would support and assist each other mutually. In this way everything that can be expected from each of the three branches thus united will be achieved in the combined institution. And furthermore the results of the combination will affect each of the branches so beneficially as to render each much more perfect than it could ever be made if each of the three branches were carried out by itself.

The central institute must be supported by pecuniary means large enough to pay a considerable portion of the expenses of the two other branches. The pupils of the central institute would all require Kindergarten training, for which purpose it must have a Kindergarten by itself. It could not get along without it. This Kindergarten of the central institute would open its doors to outsiders and admit other children as pupils, thus forming the nucleus of the second institute.

Again, the pupils of the third institute would be the attendants to the pupils of the central institute. Each pupil of the third institute would be intrusted with the special care of two or three pupils of the central institute, to whose needs she would have to attend in the morning and evening. For such service the pupils of

the third institute would be remunerated either in money, or in board and tuition, which would enable poor girls to attend and prepare for their natural duties in life as thoroughly as girls from well-to-do families who could pay for the course.

The combination of the three institutes as depicted just above, would greatly facilitate the management of the Kindergarten, which might by such means become more perfect than any Kindergarten existing, isolated from institutes that could help to support it, and could, no doubt, be developed to be a model institution for other Kindergartens.

The third institute, constituting the normal school for Kindergarten nurses and Kindergarteners, might, in the extent of its usefulness, grow to be the most important part of the system. It would derive great benefit from its organic connection with the first and second institutes. Under really good management it would confer extraordinary advantages upon the other parts of the system, by securing to them a uniform method of treating the children under the superintendence and direction of the normal teachers. The scope of the studies of the normal institute might then be advanced considerably beyond what can at present be reached, and it would be more surely attainable than the present smaller extent of studies. A reduction of the expenses of the normal course by means of counting the services of the normal pupils at the central institute as part payment, would, in a majority of cases, allow young ladies to remain longer at the school. If the present short course could be extended, such an increase of time alone would produce an

extension of the range of studies. Further, the practical occupation in the first and second institutes would naturally increase the abilities of the students.

The greatest difficulty in the execution of the plan will, no doubt, be found in selecting the principal of the whole institution. The three principals of the three institutes could easier be found, and their assistants easier still. But I have no doubt a suitable lady could be found, considering that common sense, a high moral dignity, and a natural, warm love for children, are of greater importance than profound scholarship.

Such is, in few words, my plan

Having so far explained his idea, Froebel took up the task of discussing ways and means to carry out his plan. All his proposals refer to his own time, his acquaintances and limited resources, which to know would not profit anybody to-day. A great portion of his proposals may, therefore, be omitted, but a few remarks may be mentioned as showing his way of looking at things :

At one place, Froebel refers to the German poet, Friedrich Schiller, as having said that the inclination to play ought to be rendered serviceable in the education of man ; and continuing, Froebel asks : " How can we honor Schiller most suitably ? " and he answers : " The fittest recognition of a noble and great man consists in continuing in his sense and spirit the work which he commenced, in adopting his spirit as the guiding principle of labor in general. Any educational work, then, founded upon play as a means of developing childhood, is work in the spirit of Schiller."

There might be an objection raised against keeping so many children in one building, which would deprive them of the family influences, says Froebel at another point, and he proceeds to propose that a number of children might be accommodated in private families.

Supposing all these conditions could be fulfilled, says Froebel in conclusion, there remains the question of the superintendency which is, as it were, the inmost soul of the entire enterprise. It is of the utmost importance to find a competent lady for the position.

Then Froebel proceeds to offer the position to the mother and sister of Herr von Arnswald, trying hard to persuade the ladies to undertake the task. But he did not succeed in this. Neither was he able to establish the institution outlined above. There is no doubt that his plan was well conceived, and that a similar "orphan asylum with Kindergarten and Normal School" would be highly serviceable to the cause of education even now.

LETTER 12.—VON ARNSWALD TO FROEBEL.

(*Selected Passages.*)

EISENACH, Nov. 27, 1847.

Regarding the grand enterprise which you propose, we acknowledge the spirit of love and self-denial that dictated it, but cannot at the same time deceive ourselves by denying the immense difficulties of its execution. Can we hope that such an institution could ever be carried out with the limited means at the disposal of private individuals? We cannot. For, first, the foundation will require sums of money much too large;

secondly, the responsibilities attaching to the rearing of little children are too great; next, there would be cases of sickness and death, which might play havoc with the reputation of the institution; and undermine confidence in its management and thirdly, will guardians or widows be disposed to intrust their children to an institution whose purpose is the education of educators and nurses? Will they consent to have their children serve as objects for the normal students to experiment upon in their course of practical study? Will they not much rather demand that their children be placed in the care of nurses and educators that have finished their course and perfected their own education?

Convinced that you have not your own outward interest in view, but are solely solicitous to lay a sound foundation for a perfect education of the people, I would suggest that you, or anybody, should submit the idea to the public in order to elicit a discussion of the plan. Such a discussion would relieve you of being the only one to carry the responsibility; it would not only make known your ideas, but give you an opportunity to develop and mature and inspire them with greater certainty of a successful issue; last, and not least, it would interest many people in your scheme, whose combination would offer guaranties of practical success.

In order to secure a successful realization, the plan ought to be taken up by the State. There are many orphanages, though far from enough. Could they not be made serviceable for the training of nurses and educators? States, or cities, or villages, either officially or through private efforts united in societies, or clubs,

ought to undertake the establishment of such normal schools by transforming, or adding . normal departments to, the orphan houses already established.

Might it not be advisable, as a test of the feasibility of your scheme, to try if very small children would be intrusted to your care? Or, would there be an objection to your trying at Rudolstadt? I think Keilhau, with its established reputation, would be the best place for the education of the female missionaries of your new education. Let states, cities, and towns, or private associations, found kindergartens and orphan asylums, according to your plan, and it would be your business to educate attendants, nurses, and Kindergarteners for these institutions.

Dec. 4. — Your "Mothers' Songs" have a sweet sound on the zither. My wife, or sister, will sing them to our baby, and I accompany them on the zither. Baby likes the sound, evidently, and will lie still a long time listening to the instrument. I would recommend the zither to you as a means to awaken the sense of music in your little pupils. It is easily learned. I have heard it played by children of six or seven years. It is a splendid means for training the ear to distinguish niceties of sound. If the strings are out of tune ever so little, the instrument is sure to render the disharmony perceptible. Thus it will serve to develop musical hearing.²⁸

LETTER 13.—FROEBEL TO VON ARNSWALD.

KEILHAU, Dec. 9, 1847.

It is the consciousness of a man's own life, of his own living activity, which affords an elevated and inexhaustible source of the enjoyment of life, of pleasures which, I believe, will continue ours beyond the grave by determining the condition of our soul.²⁹

I am glad that you are now established in a more spacious dwelling. No doubt, larger rooms add substantially to a more beautiful evolution of the life of a little child, though there be only an increase in the quantity of light and a greater purity of the air it breathes.³⁰

The favorable reception which your mother and sister accorded to my proposal, has encouraged me and filled me with the confidence that this exchange of views will produce blossoms and fruits to the advancement of human welfare. A thoughtful treatment of childhood like that practised by your sister, ought to be communicated like the force of a magnet: if practised in the position of superintendent, it would reproduce itself in others and be intensified and developed. Let us, therefore, pursue and develop the idea in order to be prepared to embrace every opportunity, however small and seemingly insignificant, from which the institution may quite unexpectedly sprout and grow. Difficulties will vanish of themselves if the realization be carried on according to natural conditions. Remember, how Keilhau and Burgdorf, and the Kindergartens were commenced; for instance, that at Dresden for

which I laid the foundation during my sojourn there in 1838 to 9.

Educational unions are also beginning to show their influence. I have no doubt that as they become general in the land, they will be the moving power in the progress of all popular and national education.

Considering one by one, the difficulties which you fear, there is, first, your fear that "such an institution could never be carried out with the limited means at the disposal of private individuals." I founded Keilhau without any outward means or friends, and the institution has already celebrated its thirty-first birthday. If that is too small for you, I remind you of the orphan house at Halle. Have they not equally grown out of nothing? and grown by nothing but the truth of the thought which founded them, by the firmness of the conviction, and the steadiness of execution, and, last, not least, by the perfect unity of those engaged in the work, that is to say, in the end by an invisible, that is, a spiritual unity of action?

You say, "The foundation will require sums much too large." That is true, but they are not required — all at once.³¹ The spirit living in the cause, must and will provide the sums.

Again remember Keilhau! When I resolved to found that institution, I knew not where it could be commenced, whether at Keilhau or at another place, or what name to give to it; and all the capital I possessed under the sun, counting in everything, did not amount to more than five cents, say five cents. Yet the institution was started, and has continued to this date.

And the institution required great sums, it is true,

but—not all at once.³¹ Until it reached the comprehensive extent at which it is now standing, and while it was still managed by my sole and direct initiative, a few hundred thousand dollars passed through my hands.

Now look at August Hermann Francke!³² My work cannot be compared at all with the grandeur of his work. Nevertheless, the same conditions of success were active in either work; namely, unity, trustfulness, and perseverance.

In the second place, you consider “the responsibilities too great.” As regards myself, I never yet found them too great, and, thank God, during the thirty-one years that the institution has been going, not a pupil has died, although I have had to contend with severe diseases and have never consulted a physician, not even in the severest cases, but have treated them by nothing but the strictest diet. I had at one time about sixty pupils in my house, and at present there are fifty. Nevertheless, it is evident that every responsibility ought to be avoided by a strict medical surveillance.

In the third place, you utter an apprehension that parents and guardians of children would hesitate to intrust their little wards to an institution where those who would have to care for them were themselves students instead of being practised teachers or nurses. But these students are assistants of the superintendent and of the regular teachers who are always there, and whose uniform normal treatment of the children will preclude the possibility of injury being produced by a change or any want of experience on the part of students.³³

Your idea to make the school a State institution I

should not consider advisable until it had been established and had reached a point of comparative perfection. The State, being fixed in its institutions, cannot but bind and enchain free motion and bring it to a stand. The State, as such, does not love, foster, and protect free development until it has either experienced, or thinks it foresees with certainty, that it will derive profit from it. Just so the farmer does not love the flower of the apple-tree or of flax for its own sake, but merely on account of what it promises; in the form of a daisy the flower is indifferent to him; and he hates the beautiful corn-flower as a noxious weed. It is the free man, the free family, that must create free institutions. After these have been in existence long enough for the State to perceive their usefulness, it is but too quick in seizing hold of them in an arbitrary manner, and will perchance not kill but surely enchain them. That is why our intended institution ought to have gathered strength enough to be able to bear blossom and fruit even in fetters, as the vine will do in the lattice work on the wall.³⁴.

You said further, "There are orphanages; could they not be made serviceable for the training of nurses and educators?" No doubt they could, but they must be Kindergartens first. I proposed such a change to a number of institutions, but without success. You have no conception how much I have already done for spreading my system, so extensively proved and acknowledged as good. But the final result of all my endeavors has hitherto been nothing but an endless succession of repulsions upon, and the confinement within, my own self.

Nothing would be easier than a transformation of (negative) children's homes into genuine (positive) Kindergartens. But there is a poor mother here and an old maid there who cannot be supplied with a living unless the antiquated homes are maintained in their present form ; that is to say, unless the hundred, or half a hundred, of helpless little children intrusted to her care be robbed of their first and most needed mental food. Yea, truly, our misguided commiseration does lead us into any number of miserable actions.³⁵

My intention to have a normal school for Kindergarteners I have not been able to carry out here at Keilhau, because we are short of space. That is why my courses have had an ephemeral existence only. This winter I could not even send out my prospectuses, because I did not know how to accommodate any pupils. Thus I am compelled to look out for a more suitable locality. But where I may find it, I do not know yet. I have repeatedly been asked to go to Paris, to London, even to America, in order to carry out my plans there. But that would be no help to my German people, and I feel I am nothing if not a German.

I hope your suggestion to establish my institution at Eisenach may be fulfilled. Following your invitation I shall go there as soon as possible and look about for myself whether the chances will favor my plans. It would be a splendid success if your children's home could be developed into a Kindergarten as was done at Hildburghausen and Homburg vor der Hoehe.

Now let me repeat how I think my plan might be carried out. I intend visiting Eisenach again next

spring, if possible, and to be accompanied by one of my best pupils. You would, I hope, introduce me to the Board of the Children's Home, where I might be allowed to engage the children in my educational games and occupations for a few days. The Board would then be in a position to decide whether these games and occupations should be introduced in the Home. Should they be rejected, this scheme would have to be abandoned.

But, supposing the Board should adopt my games and occupations for the Home, I should then propose to call the institution a Kindergarten, and should be willing to make it one, by promising to attend the institution with my normal pupils, to practise games and occupations with the children for an hour four times a week.

Having by such an agreement secured the Home and Kindergarten for a practice school for my pupils, I should take steps to secure the requisite number of normal pupils. And having secured them I should take a house with garden and grounds for them to live in. The leader of the household, or, as it were, the elder sister of the normal family, would be the same pupil of mine that I hope will accompany me to Eisenach as mentioned above.³⁶

There are lacking in the scheme two essential elements, namely, the superintending intellect, and the motherly matron that must examine every detail and have an eye on morals, order, cleanliness, etc. Both elements may be united in one person, or they may be found in two persons; for example, in your mother and sister. In the former, we have the eye of the matron

that need not be present all the time ; an occasional inspection, even if not oftener than once a week, might do. Your sister would attend to the intellectual needs, or to the education proper, and be at the institution every other day, if possible. Such an arrangement would be a guaranty to parents and the public, that the sense of domestication, of female dignity, and educational progress, pervaded the whole institution.

Your mother and sister, the Kindergartnerin and myself, would constitute the faculty, which would deliberate upon and determine every step to be taken. I would never presume to interfere with anything decided by the faculty. Not until this whole programme had been actually carried out for a length of time, could any success be expected to be great enough to satisfy the public and entitle us to solicit the municipal authorities and the government for assistance.

After the institution had thus been developed, step by step, and grown to be a proper normal school, a Kindergarten for a certain number of hours a week might be opened in the institution, and a number of orphans be received to board and educate.

In this manner the whole might grow up. The conditions surrounding us would determine our progress, as we should not at any time step outside of our domestic occupations unless our surroundings had suggested such action.

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I was much pleased with your remarks concerning the zither. For a long time I have been on the lookout for a musical toy, but have not yet been able to find anything better than a harmonica of tuned glass

pieces. These pieces are cut and tuned and arranged like the scale of a piano, and are struck with little cork hammers. It is a very simple plaything, has a sweet sound, and is liked by children. But it is difficult to play tunes on it. Your proposal to introduce the zither, may help me out of the difficulty. I will try.

Regarding the crying of children, much remains to be studied and said. I think crying may become spasmodic, that is, mechanical, the child being carried away with it against its own will, or, at least, without willing it. In such cases I think the readiest means to check crying is an unexpected and striking event — for instance, a bright light, sudden darkness, a strong sound, etc. Jean Paul³⁷ in his "Levana," distinguishes four kinds of crying with children, and indicates suitable checks. You could hardly find a more useful present for your young wife than a collection of the best passages and discussions from the above book; namely, Jean Paul's "Levana, or Educational Science."

Let us never lose sight of Martin Luther's words: "If we want to educate children, we must be children with them ourselves."

F. FROEBEL.

LETTER 14. — FROEBEL TO VON ARNSWALD.

KEILHAU, NEAR RUDOLSTADT,
Jan. 19, 1848.

Since I sent you my last letter I have been travelling. I visited Eisfeld and its neighborhood near Hildburghausen. I wanted to extend my propaganda for my educational ideas, and labored hard day by day from

nine in the morning till evening, and every day at another place. I returned home on New Year's Eve.³⁸

On this tour I sowed a seed which may grow and bear fruit some day, just as I expect to do at Eisenach, where, you say, there is plenty of material that might develop under the manipulation of a steady hand, which means a clear, steady, and firm activity bent on concentrating the different forces upon one point. That cannot be done better, I think, than in the way already indicated in my last letter. That pupil of mine whom I mentioned in the letter, is the very individual to advance the project in the most ingenuous and natural manner. With her assistance I can go through games and occupations with the children themselves, with a hope to awaken an interest in my method with the ladies of the city. Miss Luise Levin—that is the name of my pupil—has relatives at Eisenach, and might prolong her visit there awaiting developments.

The beginning could thus be very small. But the smallest does not preclude the greatest: the seed of the pine and fir tree is small as a mustard seed, yet in the smallest of its sprouts there is already the tendency to be a tree that shall raise its top to touch the clouds, and shall, at a distant future, maybe after centuries, be the mast of a vessel steadily conducting thousands of emigrants to the land of liberty.

Such a natural development will also tend to infuse health into the whole institution, for which reason sickness will be of much rarer occurrence in such a community than with others. You will remember that such was the case in my institution when you were a pupil with us. Yea, it is even certain, that such a natural

mode of life will strengthen such children as have been weakened and retarded by dietetic mistakes.³⁹ It is this twofold confidence which furnishes me with the fresh living courage to move once more forward to the foundation of a new institution.

It might be well to consult with the mayor of your city in advance. People like being consulted upon a matter before it is matured, or before the sparrows are crying it out from the housetops. It is correct that a man should find in such timely consultation an expression of confidence, for there is always a possibility that his advice, his opinion, will be heeded. Perceiving this, he feels a warmer interest in the matter; he is made to recognize himself as an active member of a great whole, which is founded upon the co-operation of all its members. Thus confidence in self as in others is awakened and it is upon such confidence, as upon confidence in God who does not either act or speak but through man, that any durable work can be erected or evolved.⁴⁰

As your little daughter loves the zither, so Barop's baby, not yet twelve months old, loves the piano. It seems with him to be the loud sound and the indefinite change of sounds which gives pleasure. I have had occasion to notice a number of children feel pleasure in hearing the sound of a musical instrument and perceiving the recurring movement of rhythm. The children of a peasant living near me will imitate the sound of church bells for hours, singing bim, bam, bim, bam, and even repeat the performance on the day following when no bells are ringing. I think I perceive in all this, that melody and harmony are rooted in the being

of man, and that the training of this faculty in childhood ought to be made a part of early infant education.

It is surely not right to try to appease the active tendency of life of children by allowing them all the time to suck or munch by way of feeding. The energetic infantile tendency to act, must always be satisfied, and the fingers are used as means to effect the satisfaction. For that reason we must by timely training meet this early tendency of the child to use its hands and play with hands and fingers. Let fingers and hands, by games and songs composed especially for movements, be led to make such rhythmical motions. For which purpose the children's own activity and inventiveness must be watched. I shall make this matter a particular study whenever opportunity offers.⁴¹

You ask under what conditions it would be proper to check babies in a loud voice. It is not judicious under any circumstances. The infant is living completely within the steady flow, the continuous current of objective reality, and is therefore not able to reflect on anything.⁴²

And great would be the error to try to arouse the little ones to reflect, or in fact to any activity, before they are ripe for it; that is, before the activity begins showing itself of its own accord. If your little Mary is backward in her exterior development compared to that of other infants, it does not matter so long as her mind or her inner life is gaining strength, which, you tell me, it seems to do. There is only one consideration I would urge where, as in your case, quite a number of different individuals are day by day producing a number of impressions and reactions, and thereby influencing the

development of the little being in different directions. In such a case it is not enough that the influence of each individuality should be received and retained: it must also be connected and harmonized with all the other influences. Such reception, retention, and harmonious connection require time and equanimity. It is necessary, then, that all the impressions produced should continue even and restful; that is to say, that none of them should contain an element of over-excitement.⁴³

.

For a few years past I have tried to pass the Christmas holidays, not at Keilhau, but — how shall I express it? — with the people. The reason is, that I look upon the celebration of the birthday of Christ as an important means of education for the whole people. It is necessary, of course, to give to the celebration a kind of universal sentiment. This idea I am trying to elaborate as an important concern of public life.⁴⁴

This Christmas I celebrated at Schalkau, between Sennberg and Eisfeld, with children for whom Hoffmann and Meyer provided a Christmas-tree. On this occasion it was the influence which, as I perceived, a carefully fostered child-life exercised upon the mind of older people, which afforded a full satisfaction to my longing for a popular celebration of Christmas.

This experience also convinced me that we are not able to influence parents, or the people, with any prospect of success, unless we take care of the development and education of their children.⁴⁵ The effect of such a course will be a well-ordered whole, appearing like

a cluster of flowers, a bouquet or a wreath, arranged by a lover as an emblem of his sentiments.

This single experience was so valuable to me as to appear well worth a journey in winter time. It shall not be lost sight of again in all my life and labor here, or, if we succeed, in Eisenach.

But the journey gave me more. In the society of some friends of childhood and youth whom I had partly met for the first time, partly learned to understand better than before, I continued my journey on Monday after Christmas to Cloister Veilsdorf near Hildburghausen. There we met, by appointment, upwards of twenty friends, in order to make preparations for a popular festival combined with games for children and young people. A number of teachers propose to celebrate the festival, uniting all their schools about Midsummer day.

The majority of those present had not the remotest idea of games of development, and cognate occupations, for which reason it was necessary that they themselves should first be taught to play. There being not children enough present, I said, "If we want to educate children, we must become children ourselves." There was no getting out of it; all the dignified schoolmasters had to become school-children again. They felt rather strange at it at first, but were soon so completely filled with the joyous spirit of the occasion that all worked together in perfect harmony, their hearts glowing, their senses growing clear and full of cheer, their limbs supple, and their perception active. It was not until eleven at night that we parted in a cheerful mood, and resolved to meet again the next day at a place nearer to

the forest, in order to continue the study of the subject, and afford other educators an opportunity to take part in the exercises.

And when I arrived at Bruenn the day following, I found a number of friends already awaiting me. Among them was Mr. Heim, teacher of the upper grades of the Normal School at Hildburghausen. The exercises of the preceding day had interested him so much, that he had started at seven in the morning and walked three hours in order to be in time for the commencement on the second day. He has been an esteemed teacher of the majority of the teachers at present holding positions as public-school teachers in the country round about; for which reason I greatly rejoiced at his zeal in the matter as an example to all others and a blessing to the cause.

The number present this day could hardly find seats in the room of the schoolmaster, at whose house we had met. I showed the occupations of children and their effect upon the mind and life of the child. When we parted in the evening, a meeting at a larger room in Oberwind was agreed upon for the next day, which was Wednesday, December 29th. Children were to be present, with whom games should be played similar to those which were to be played at the *Spielfest* [festival of games] projected for midsummer. I prepared the children in the evening and morning, and they displayed so much love, joy, and perseverance in the matter that I was emboldened to let them show their performances before the assembled teachers in the afternoon.

The meeting at Poppenwind on the day following was still more numerous. A number of clergymen

were present. Two pastors from Eisfeld had come in company with all the teachers of the city. The first business transacted was the reading of the resolution of the Consistorium,⁴⁶ granting the petition of the teachers to be allowed to celebrate a united children's *Spielfest*. This having been made known, those present showed an increased interest in the proceedings.

After this, I again performed games with my school-children, assigning the teachers to their places in the ranks. The result was general satisfaction; and another appointment was made for the next day at Bruenn, the home of the pastor, where the children of three schools should meet. I rehearsed with them again in the evening and morning, and the result was highly satisfactory. The exercises of the day were also witnessed by a number of ladies.

In this way my *Spielfest* for childhood, youth, and the people, was made a certainty; a committee for the general superintendence was appointed, and I was commissioned to manage the whole affair. Should the success be what I expect, I hope that the festival will greatly assist our plans at Eisenach. Anyhow, I most sincerely wish to see you at the *Spielfest*.⁴⁷

On Friday, at six in the morning, I started on my journey homeward. I had to walk the whole distance from Poppenwind, by way of Heubach, Masserberg, Katzhuette, Schwarzburg, and through the valley and Blankenburg to Keilhau. I arrived and entered the assembly room just in time to hear Middendorff speak words of farewell to the old, and welcome to the new year. I had desired to celebrate Sylvester⁴⁸ in my home circle, and had just been able to manage it.

Never before in my life did I take leave of the old year in a manner similar to this. Imagine to yourself my road running in complete darkness through the narrow Schwarza valley, which in this part does deservedly bear the name of the Black Valley.⁴⁹ It is here very narrow, in many spots apparently without an exit, as though there was no getting out of it; the mountain sides covered with a black forest, nearly touching each other at the bottom.

Such a walk in the night will necessarily turn a man's eye upon, and within himself, and upon the invisible and all-powerful unity of life. And with such ideas I entered the hall at Keilhau, all ablaze in festive illumination.

In this way, my transition from the old to the new year represented to me, not only by the circumstances, but even in the words I heard spoken, a survey of the past and a bright hope for the coming term of life. This has made a deep impression on me, and I consider it so good an omen for the successful progress of the work which we are about to begin together, that I feel prompted to devote another careful discussion to the chances of our scheme.

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You know that I was born in a village in the Thuringian Forest called Oberweissbach where my father was pastor. There were two school-teachers in the place, one of them being the leader of the choir at church, and the other the organist. The former taught the boys and the latter the girls. My father was prevented by his many official duties from teaching me himself, and

was compelled to send me to one of the schools. He selected the girls' school, because he was not satisfied with the way in which the boys' teacher attended to his duties.

It was a Monday when my father took me to school himself. I was placed on the seat of honor by the side of the teacher, for the reason, I guess, that I was the son of the pastor, or, it may be, because I was reputed a mischievous boy that should not sit with the girls. The smallest girls on the first form were seated just in front of me. A verse from the Bible treated in the sermon on the Sunday preceding, was spoken aloud by one of the older girls, and repeated by all the small girls in front. On this first day of my attendance they repeated the words of the Lord : " Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

The verse was explained to the older girls and also for me. But the little girls were not required to know it perfectly before Saturday. Meanwhile the verse was repeated by them in parts again and again, in the high pitch of their childish voices, in chorus, and in the old chanting manner of village schools. I heard this verse repeated for a long time every morning of the six days of the week, until the sounds, the words, and the sense had produced so strong an impression upon me as to make this verse the motto of my life in the truest sense of the word; for it has resounded like the chant of a chorus of nuns in my ears on all the days of my life. The older I grew, the more thoroughly was I led to recognize the full importance and efficacy, and the profound living truth of the maxim. It became the basis

and the regulator of numerous undertakings of mine, and always proved its entire truthfulness.

After this confession you will understand how profoundly I was affected and pleased to learn that you, my beloved, cherished friend, have selected the same verse as the maxim and principle of your life. With so secure a basis common to both of us, the work we commence conjointly is sure to endure, for it contains within itself the condition of duration. In this way the work which we intend to carry on conjointly, is from the start sanctioned by God and blessed through the unity of life. Let us then behold this faith in all the events of life in order to confirm and elevate our trust in God and in ourselves!⁵⁰

As you are dissatisfied with the inharmonious relations between school and home, between teachers and parents, so, I find, do others feel in many places. It is not correct to expect an improvement to be effected by a reform directly affecting the home or family. Such an improvement will surely follow, however, from a reform of the education of childhood, as I had occasion to mention above when I spoke of the influence which an increased energy of child-life must necessarily exercise upon parents. Let us try, then, what can be done by a common Kindergarten erected upon the spiritual corner-stone of the other saying of Christ: "Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

My method of educating children must be conceived and carried out in a spirit little known as yet, you say. And you are right. And for this reason am I determined to devote myself, so far as I have myself realized

this spirit, to the management of the institutions until they who are now assisting me, have conceived the right spirit and realize its power. There is no end of difficulties obstructing my way, you say: but if we join hands we can overcome them all. That may not be easy to do, but I am prepared to suffer them patiently until their removal can be assured. In my life I have had many occasions to prove my patience and perseverance in single-handed struggle.⁵¹ But this time I shall have not only you and your ladies to support me, but my pupil of whom I have spoken before. She is a simple-minded, modest and sensible girl, whose activity and successes in the practical work of my system will be a living link of mediation between the world and myself. Her help will be altogether invaluable.⁵²

Her activity will demonstrate the living charm pertaining to a woman's play with children wherever and whenever going on. And it will also show the deficiencies attaching to the common natural play of women with children. The greatest of these defects is the absence of rhythm and tact. Not only the spontaneous play of older children, but all the movements of the fingers and hands and members and parts of the body ought from the beginning to be made rhythmical in ever changing meters and verses. And the child will be benefited and entertained, if the rhythmical movements are accompanied, if not by songs, at all events by words clearly spoken and, if possible, versified. Words spoken in a simple way of chanting will surely produce an impression upon the child much more powerful than plain speech.

Another deficiency in common play with children is

this, that it is so frequently connected with thoughtless or even meaningless words. It is true, the child does not yet understand the words, but nevertheless he retains the sound of any word indelibly on the tablet of his memory. At a latter period of life, when comprehension attaches a sense to the sound, the senseless word will be the more injurious. For the child, when awakening to an understanding, has already been completely used to listen to and to employ words which he does not understand and which are altogether senseless.

It is a necessary precaution to be observed by every educator, to select only sensible words to be spoken to children from the start. Every word ought to offer to the child's mind a sound to which to attach some elements of thought, from the first moment when it begins to think at all, which is at the moment when the first sense impressions are not only received but also perceived. Such words will offer food to the mind, to the heart and intellect, from the cradle, and will thus, no doubt, serve to supply strength for the active life to follow.⁵⁸

Miss Luise Levin, who is working in my room, has told me just now, in connection with what I said above, that a relative of hers, a baby of two years, did not like singing, but listened with pleasure to a clear recital, although he did not understand much of it. I moreover know of two little boys, whose mothers used to sing to them; and whenever the latter sat down at the piano, the boys would go and ask her not to sing. I wonder whether the distortions of the face that accompany the act of singing with the majority of performers of the

art, are the cause of this childish antipathy? For it is just this sort of singing which the boys did not want to see. You see the little beings will supply us all the time with problems for solution.

FRIEDRICH FROEBEL.

CHAPTER III

THE SAND BATH—MOULDING SAND

¹¹ This suggestion was the origin of that most useful of present Kindergarten appliances, the *sand bath*; and it is interesting to see how its inventor fore-saw the manifold uses to which it might be put. It might be, he suggests, an imitation of the Kindergarten with its beds and walks and lawns, its little tables and chairs, and the children and teachers engaged in it. Then it can be used for building brick walls with the cubes used as stones, or houses with blocks. The latter occupation may be an imitation of building a house by first digging the basement and then erecting the walls, etc. The last suggestion made by the inventor is most valuable, namely, the laying out of mountain and valley. If carried out, this will offer a splendid way of giving the first practical lessons in topography. The child can build its own house with its garden, or yard, and street. Or, if the children are poor and have no garden, the schoolhouse may be the starting-point, and may mark the street in which it stands. From this street the children may go to those of their friends and other places, or the nearest streets may be enlarged to the city, locating the chief places and the surrounding country, lake, river, and so on. A hole may be dug which may serve to represent a well, a mouse-hole, or

the burrow of the fox, of the prairie-dog, etc. Trees, orchards, woods, poles, parks, etc., may be made with sticks and leaves. Animals, children, and men may be cut out of paper, in order to give life to the landscape.

Sand forms have been made for the little ones to use in various ways. They make cakes of sand with the forms, and place each cake on a plate, place the plates on a tray, and go to present the cakes to their teachers or friends. This play practises them, first, in making good forms of loose sand; secondly, in handling the form on its plate; and thirdly, in carrying a tray full of the loose heaps without upsetting them. Great varieties of such forms are made and supplied in boxes.

Sand of one kind or another is found in many localities, and where not found it is easily procured. The sand bath can, therefore, be easily had everywhere, and not much study is required to make it useful to children. All that is necessary is to see that the children do not wallow in the sand, or throw it about, but try to represent in sand forms whatever they see round about them. If thus used, the sand will be found one of the best means of occupation and of education for the little ones.

¹² Dr. Mai went to see Froebel at Keilhau in the summer of 1848. But he had actively embraced the Froebel idea in 1845, when he established a Kindergarten at Eisenach, which is still carried on by Miss Traberth. Dr. Mai was a conscientious and clever teacher, and remained at the head of his ladies' school to the end of his life. His correspondence with Froebel was carried on for several years. It is hoped that

it can be published some time, as it will surely add many interesting passages to the Froebel literature.

¹³ Enthusiasm is faith *& outrance*; and how great a portion of this boundless enthusiasm Froebel possessed, is made evident in the advice which he gave to the teacher, Mr. K——. This young man was a public-school teacher at Eisenach, which means, in Germany, an official position and regular income secured for life, free from cares or anxiety about the future and any vicissitudes in its lap. No political revolution, no change of parties in power, can affect such a position; the German public-school teacher is settled permanently. And this secure position in life Froebel boldly advised to be thrown to the wind in order to obtain freedom to serve the Kindergarten movement, which, at the time, offered nothing but the certainty of continual struggles and privations. To make up for such an immense sacrifice, Froebel offers the sublimity of enthusiasm in the service of childhood. As Christ said, "Whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it;" just so says Froebel to him who would follow him, that he shall recover his loss many times by receiving his own self back in a blessed and perfected condition. Froebel himself had done the same thing; he had sacrificed every prospect of outward success to his idea of the education of man; he had submitted to incredible privations for it, and yet never for a moment repented of it. In his biographical sketches he tells how deeply his childish heart had been moved by the word, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness;" and that this had become his life-long motto, which he tried to realize by making that other word of Christ his

own which says, "Suffer little children to come unto me :" and out of the abundance of this wonderful enthusiasm and faith in his divine mission he advised others to follow him, if, as he said, they could do so deliberately and with a devoted soul.

Slowly as a tree whose growth is not unduly hastened by the warm surroundings of a hothouse, but in the midst of storms and frosts, alternating with heats and balmy breezes, is gradually developing its form, so the ideal of his education of children had grown in the mind of Froebel. And to this very slowness of development was due the bright and ever-present warmth of his enthusiasm. This brightness and warmth sparkled in his eyes and assisted his words with those who had the good luck of living with him and being taught by him personally. They all imbibed his enthusiasm and retained it to the end. That is why Froebel could say in truth that he had never found one who had repented of his resolve to devote his life to the Kindergarten education.

And this enthusiasm was not buried with Froebel's body. It continues in all his true disciples. And no doubt, while it lasts, the great cause will grow and prosper until all mankind shall be blessed in it.

¹⁴ Although this description of the evils connected with the position and office of nursery maids may have been correct in Germany in those days, it is no longer so, at least not in this country. For although here, in most houses, the cook still holds the superior place as regards salary and respect, a good dinner being considered of greater importance than the intellectual and moral needs of the children, yet most nursery girls of

our day pretend to know something about the treatment of children. Besides, in this country, nursery girls, and domestic servants in general, are not so plentiful by far as in the old country. For this reason it does not seem as necessary here, as it is in Europe, to have institutions for the express purpose of training maids in the business of nursing and of imparting the first education to little children, i.e., to infants.

What is more needed here, is, that *the mothers themselves should know what their children really want*; that is to say, that they should themselves have an insight into the necessities of education in general, and of infantile education in particular. They ought to know that upon the proper natural development of the child during its first years of life, the whole future of the little one depends. Later education must and will superadd many things, but the groundwork must be done in the nursery. And there the mother alone rules: in her is vested unlimited power, and on her rests the entire responsibility. So much more necessary is it for her to know the whole extent of her duty.

To the mother alone, infantile education is intrusted. Why does this trust not extend to the time when the child grows older? Woman is undoubtedly the natural educator of man; and the entire management of education ought to be, and would, I think, have been intrusted to her long ago, had she shown herself better prepared to undertake it. But she is not yet prepared for so responsible an office, and her lack of capability is due to her own misapprehension of the situation more than to any other circumstances. The women teachers of this country generally consider their public-

school duties as a convenient pastime between their own years of school attendance and marriage; and they do not look upon the office of teacher as a life business for which they ought to prepare and study with all the power and energy of which they are capable. The neglect of self-preparation is the cause of the lack of capacity to which must be attributed the fact that female teachers attend to the duties in the classes, while nearly all the superintendence has to be done by male teachers, who have made the task of teaching their life business, and have thoroughly prepared and fitted themselves for it. No doubt, the fact of having assigned to woman the largest share of public-school duties, gives to this country a position in advance of every other country of the world; nevertheless, a great deal remains to be done.

In order to enable this nation to do its duty in this direction, the female half of the people must first be prepared to comprehend the duties naturally devolving on them. Mothers' classes have been started in many places in connection with the Kindergarten movement, and they will certainly do their share toward awakening the necessary interest in infantile education. But more is needed to prepare young wives and girls for the duties of their future calling as nurses and educators of their own children.

Not to prepare carefully for this calling, is to inflict irreparable injury upon their own prospects of happiness. For there is no happiness comparable to that which a mother will find in the training of her own children. The errors of so many women of our time, in seeking in society the recreation, or pleasure, which

they overlook, or do not know how to find, in the company of their children, will always evoke a feeling of compassion and pity in those who have enjoyed the true delights of home. A woman need not be a recluse; but if she would be truly happy, let her children always be her first and greatest consideration; and she should not allow to society or to any public claims more than the second place among her duties.

Institutions for nursery maids, as proposed by Froebel, and at present established in many places in the old country, seem out of place in this country. But such institutions would do well for mothers and girls in general. A full Kindergarten course may not be necessary, as they can attain as much as they want in a shorter time. The course in such institutions must consist in imparting practical and theoretical instruction: first, in attending to the bodily wants of children, including dietetics and hygiene; secondly, in keeping children busy in a manner to impart a love of work and arouse a love of self-improvement, and to develop the social instincts; and, thirdly, in awakening a general interest in the progress of mankind, as depending upon the education of the growing generation. Such institutions would do more for the general progress of the nation than any other institution now existing, or any which can be imagined.

¹⁵ Pastor Hildenhagen at Quetz was one of the earliest and most enthusiastic disciples of Froebel. He had founded a Kindergarten at Quetz, which was in a flourishing condition, as well as the young people's school which he had founded. This prosperity lasted as long as he remained at Quetz. But when he left

that place, following his love of teaching youth, and having accepted the head mastership of an institute at Halle, both the Kindergarten and the young people's school soon died from inanition. These facts are telling examples of what a man of enthusiasm and energy can do for the advancement of mankind, and of education more particularly; and likewise of the duty devolving upon every one who knows the New Education to do his utmost to make it prosper and prevail in the face of the diffidence and indolence pervading the ranks of the people at large.

¹⁶ The "Reformation" is the name generally given in Germany to the reformation of the Church of Rome, inaugurated by Martin Luther. It began in 1517, and was the cause of almost incessant wars until the peace of Westphalia in 1648.

This letter being addressed to a faithful minister of the Lutheran denomination, Froebel evidently thought he could enlist the pastor's interest in his cause most effectually by showing what he conceived to be the points of contact between the Lutheran reformation of the Church and the Froebelian reformation of the school.

¹⁷ To Martin Luther the German nation is indebted for a remarkable extension and popularization of its long-standing educational institutions. It was he who introduced the first public schools and wrote his catechism of the Protestant faith as the first school-book of Germany. He impressed upon all the Protestant princes and States of Germany the necessity of having the youth of the land publicly and regularly instructed in the faith, if they would stand firm against Roman Catholicism.

¹⁸ The Wartburg is an old castle of the mediæval Landgraves of Thuringia, located close to the city of Eisenach. After Luther had had his hearing and made his famous speeches before the Reichstag (imperial congress) at Worms on the Rhine, in 1521, he was, on his return journey, suddenly seized by a band of masked knights and taken to the Wartburg with orders to remain there. There he began his translation of the Bible. While engaged in the work, the devil (so says the legend) appeared to him and threatened him. But Luther, nothing daunted, threw an inkstand at his Satanic majesty, and the black spot on the wall made by the ink is still shown to visitors at the Wartburg. It is to this translation of the Bible that Froebel refers as the word of the Lord made ready for us. The Wartburg, by the by, is also the place where the great singing contest occurs in Richard Wagner's opera "Tannhäuser."

¹⁹ Froebel was in the habit of sending those of his letters which were of particular importance to a number of friends and sympathizers. At this period copies of his letters were submitted to Von Arnswald. So was letter four addressed to a pastor at Eisenach. It is in answer to this communication that letter five was written.

²⁰ Froebel's careful attention was directed toward each child with which he came in contact. Thus he encouraged his friend Arnswald to forward to him reports upon the daily doings of the little Mary, Arnswald's daughter. These reports Froebel read to his pupils and discussed with them, rendering every single observation made by Arnswald more useful by showing its relation to general principles. He was also ever

ready to receive child visitors, and to entertain and keep them occupied. Being once interpellated upon such an occasion, he said to his friend, "Who knows what is in that child? It may grow to be of much greater importance than I am to the world, and I feel bound to serve it as much as is in my power." Another time, a little boy from the village came to see Froebel, and stood bashfully at the door of the room, in which a merry play was going on. "Why do you not step in, Joe?" the boy was asked. "The playmaster must first come to me," replied the boy, half aloud. Froebel chanced to overhear the boy's reply, and immediately went out to satisfy the boy's wish. He then went to see the boy's home, and finding the floor of the rooms to be the bare ground, without a wood flooring, he told the mother it was unwholesome for the children. In the winter following, when Froebel was absent from his home, the same mother went to Frau Froebel and asked her to write to him that a flooring had been laid in her dwelling; adding that she felt sure Froebel would be glad to know that his advice had been acted on. This shows the sympathetic attention which Froebel paid to everybody with whom he came in contact, chiefly where there were children; and also that he knew how to show his sympathy in a way so gratifying to the people that they gratefully received and esteemed it.

²¹ This little trait is another demonstration of the self-denying sympathy with which Froebel treated the children. There are few people who, on being compelled to hear all day long the same loud, monotonous melody from a child's throat, would not grow nervous and irritated and desire to stop it. Not so Froebel.

He listened to the chant, and studied its relation to child life, and concluded that song has an important part in the development of childhood, and ought to be carefully fostered in every family.

²² Froebel carefully distinguishes the different grades of qualification of women for the office of educating children. He distinguishes between Kinderpflegerinnen (literally children's caretakers) and Kinderführinnen (literally children's guides). Among Kinderpflegerinnen he distinguishes Kinderwärterinnen (children's nurses) and Kindermädchen (literally children's servants, i.e., nurses). By Kinderführerin he means Kindergarteners, or real educators of children in Kindergartens or in the houses.

²³ The family Arnswald and other friends to whom Froebel submitted the draft, criticised it so extensively as to convince Froebel of the necessity to rewrite the whole. The identical draft here published has never before been printed, except in the *Kindergarten Magazine* of November, 1891.

²⁴ The original lectures of Froebel as delivered to his pupils are in course of preparation for publication. They will be accompanied by remarks indicating how Frau Froebel used to explain and practically illustrate the lectures. This little work may serve as a guide to the lecturer and teacher, and likewise as a handbook to refresh the memory of students in and out of Kindergarten Normal schools, and also as a reference book to the practical Kindergartener.

²⁵ The pamphlet here mentioned by Froebel was published under the title, "Die Kindergarten," by W. Middendorff. A second edition of it was prepared by Dr.

Wichard Lange, and published by Hoffman & Campe, at Hamburg. The little book contains a clear and concise exposition of the principles of the system, and may still be studied with advantage by Kindergarteners and mothers. As a sample of its style we print an *Extract from Middendorff's Die Kindergaerten.*—“Look at the little ones, how they start off on their walk to the Kindergarten in the morning, happy and cheerful, like young tourists ; and again how they long to get home to their parents a few hours later in order to communicate the splendid treasures which are filling their minds. They have the precious feeling that they have been active, have exercised their faculties, have gained an increase of pleasures and abilities. They take home this treasure like a sweet-smelling nosegay with which to rejoice the hearts of their parents. Will these disappoint them ? Look at the father coming home from business with a longing for mental recreation as though it were an enlivening draught, and looking to his little ones to offer him the potion. He is not disappointed. Every trace of weariness and dissatisfaction that may have been visible on the mother's brow, has already been smoothed away by the happy prattle of the children, who now are busy to freshen his appetite for dinner. Their cheeks rosy and fresh, their eyes sparkling with cheerful animation, they will answer his question, what they have done at the Kindergarten, before he has had time to ask. The words are hardly quick enough to express the pleasurable ideas that fill their minds : How often they have hit the cubes with the balls ; how often they caught the ball in succession ; what new games they have learned ; what new plants

are growing in their beds in the garden ; what flowers are there in bloom ; what they have built, namely, their breakfast table, their mother's sewing-table, the sun that set so red the preceding evening ; what songs and sayings they have learned ; what stories were told by the teacher ; how their good friends, the girls and boys, behaved, and so on.

Do you not think that, imperfect as they may be, it is these childish communications that will render the meal cheery and wholesome, and will unite the whole family as with a bond of sympathy, blessing it with renewed strength and delight ? In this way the Kindergarten will clear the atmosphere of the household and make family life happy in its harmony."

²⁶ It was not granted to Froebel to carry out this plan which he calls "the copestone of his earthly labors." He was taken away too soon for us and for the world. During the few years that elapsed between the communication of the above scheme to his friend and his death, his means were too scanty, and the encouragement he met with too small, to enable him to attempt the realization of so comprehensive an enterprise. It is fortunate that his plan was not buried with him. In the above description and the additional explanations given in his subsequent letters to the same address, the scheme is fully developed and can be clearly understood according to the intentions of the master. No class of children is more in need of help than orphans, and the duty to care for them is among the most essential, necessary and beneficial. It is by a proper education that the best interests of all mankind are to be served, and it would truly be a blessing to

the rising generation, if orphan institutions could be established according to the plan of Froebel.

²⁷ The name "*German Kindergarten*" was given to this institution by Froebel, June 28, 1840. On that day the four hundredth anniversary of the invention of the art of printing by Johann Gutenberg was celebrated all over Germany. The festivity at Blankenburg, where Froebel had established his first Kindergarten, was very enthusiastic, inspired by Froebel who delivered the speech of the day. It was on this occasion that he said, the purpose and the inner life of the institution demanded that it should be called "Kindergarten;" but the spirit that had originated it and favored and fostered its growth, was altogether German, for which reason he proposed to call it the "*German Kindergarten*." His hearers were greatly moved, and did not separate without subscribing a goodly sum to advance the spread of the German Kindergarten.

²⁸ Concerning the zither recommended by Herr von Arnswald for use at the Kindergarten, Mrs. Luise Froebel reports that this instrument is in use at a Kindergarten at the city of Eisenach. She says that the children's songs at that institution had an unusually sweet sound, and that a disturbing want of harmony, too often found at other institutions, was never heard at this Kindergarten at Eisenach. The zither she suggests, may produce sounds which the untutored ear of the child may hear more distinctly than the sounds of a piano, and which it can consequently strike more accurately with its voice. It might be useful for other Kindergartens to act upon this suggestion in order to improve the training of the musical gift.

²⁹ This is a strange saying : The consciousness of earthly life will afford pleasures which will continue ours beyond the grave and determine the condition of our soul. Such a condition is impossible, unless the soul after death is of a kind with the soul in the flesh, unless the departed soul has sentiments and states like those of the soul in an earthly body. It follows that Froebel did not conceive the departed soul to be an unsubstantial, impalpable phantom, but a real being with feelings and thoughts which would continue the soul-life of man on earth. Whether this idea be considered as corresponding to facts and experiences, or as gratuitous, there is no denying the fact that it is in harmony with the conception which Froebel had of life in general. He never had a thought, but it was a symbol of an exterior reality, and his ideas were not clear to him himself until he had outwardly realized them. He found similes in nature and life for all his thoughts ; that is to say, every thought of his was realized to him in a form perceptible to his senses, or it assumed a shape distinctly perceivable. It was the same with his belief in immortality : his immortal soul was realized in his thoughts as a distinctly defined shape or form which, naturally, could hardly be different from his natural body. In his creed, as in his educational and practical principles, it is evident from the thought just elucidated, Froebel's intellect rose to an astonishing height of *naïve* and ingenuous power which distinguishes him advantageously from the general tameness and mediocrity of his times.

³⁰ Here again Froebel proves himself in advance of his time. Light and pure air were not valued so much

in his time as they now are, but he insists that they add to a more beautiful evolution of life. His conclusions are confirmed by the numerous examinations of the eyes of school-children made and published in the last twenty or thirty years. These medical examinations have proved that insufficient light, or light entering the room from the wrong side, does not only injure the eyesight, causing short-sightedness with all its unpleasant influences and its stunting effect upon the development of the power of perception, but also induces the habit of stooping in sitting when engaged in reading or writing. Such incorrect carriage of the body causes congestion to the vital organs of the trunk, to the head, and, most banefully, to other organs. It is true that the incorrect shape of the desks and benches used in our schools greatly aggravates the evil influences of insufficient light. Such errors of construction tend not only to deteriorate the health of body and mind of school-children, but render them less capable to do their duty at school and to make such progress as they might under other surroundings. Nor should it be forgotten that they increase the difficulties with which the teacher has to contend, and weaken the chance of maintaining good discipline. The construction of schoolhouses and furniture with particular attention to hygienic conditions, ought to be made a special study by school boards, superintendents, and teachers.

⁸¹ What a wonderful amount of practical wisdom there is expressed in this "not all at once." It is a practical realization of the scriptural warning to take no heed of the morrow; enough for the day is the trouble thereof. And it is less likely to be misunder-

stood. It means this much : If your plan is well matured, and you are convinced that your strength is great enough to carry it out, do not shrink from momentary difficulties, but face them boldly, and be sure they will diminish and disappear in the most natural way. Begin not larger than your present means allow, and for the requirements of the morrow, the morrow will surely take care. It is this little saying "not all at once," which enabled Froebel to accomplish all he did without any means at starting.

⁸² August Hermann Francke was the founder of the extensive Orphan House at the city of Halle-on-Saale in Prussia. He had not a cent when he began his orphanage, says the legend, but raised all he wanted by prayer. The establishment is at present one of the largest scholastic institutions of Germany.

⁸³ "We will not lend our children to be experimented on and used for practice work in the training of students preparing to be teachers some future day," is an objection frequently made by parents to schools where so-called practice teaching is going on. It would be as correct to refuse being treated at a hospital connected with a school of medicine, because medical students are frequently deputed in such institutions to attend to patients. Such students are under the superintendence of an experienced staff of medical men, whose instructions they have to carry out. In most cases, therefore, patients are in better hands with these students than with a common, irresponsible, and too often incompetent private practitioner. It is the same with the practice teacher — who acts under the superintendence of an experienced staff of teachers.

Common-school teachers, on the other hand, are not always trained for their calling, and are consequently incompetent even more frequently than medical practitioners. In most cases, therefore, pupils are in better hands with students of Normal Schools than with more or less incompetent teachers at work in public schools.

⁸⁴ How correct this view of Froebel was, the present German emperor has again proved by his wanton attempt to regulate the schools of Germany according to his personal fancy, as if one man could at any time be able to say what is right in school systems, or methods, and reduce the teachers of a whole nation to machines. The same event shows how erroneous would be any attempt to make the public school of this country dependent upon the central government, to be handled like the post-office. It also shows that the governments of the states, and of cities and country towns, ought not to be allowed the power to interfere with schools to as great an extent as they do. The school must be independent of all governmental interference so far as system and method go. All the influence to be allowed to the authorities ought to be the naming of certain subjects to be taught in school, and the goal to be reached in them.

⁸⁵ "Nothing would be easier than a transformation of children's refuges into genuine Kindergartens," says Froebel, if "our misguided commiseration did not lead us into any number of miserable actions." Examples need not be crowded together to prove the truth of the latter assertion in a country where "politics" rules the appointments of teachers as of other office-holders. Regarding appointments to communal and state

offices, there have always been criticism and recrimination. But for the defence of poor, innocent childhood against unfit teachers and nurses, the public press has little time or room to spare. But will not the girls and boys of the day be the women and men of the future? And ought not their interests to be protected, and their education to be the main object of public as of private life? Their education must enable them to make a living, and to fill their places in the world to the full extent of their natural abilities. Under such circumstances, to appoint an incompetent teacher of youth, or a disqualified matron of a children's home, is a crime committed against the generation to come.

³⁶ The Kindergartnerin whom Froebel here calls one of his best pupils, and whom he intended to accompany him and help him and be his right hand in the establishment of his great plan, was none other than Miss Luise Levin, afterwards his wife, at present his widow. They did not go to Eisenach, as Froebel thought of doing when he wrote this letter, but the lady was his sole and indispensable helpmate in all his undertakings, his classes and lectures to the end of his life.

³⁷ Jean Paul Friedrich Richter, known in literature by his two first names, Jean Paul, was one of the most prolific and original of German authors. For a long time he shared with Schiller the honor of being the favorite of the youth of Germany. His work on education, called "*Levana*," retains to this day a certain reputation for its ingenious reflections and quaint sayings.

³⁸ When Froebel undertook this journey, he was less than four months short of sixty-six years old. But the activity he displayed was something wonderful. He

travelled on foot across the high mountains and deep valleys of the Thuringian forest, covered with deep snow and ice. In order not to lose any of the precious hours of day, he would wander from one place to another in the evening, after having finished his business in the place he left. And however late he might arrive at a new place, he would always be up and start out on his business early the next morning. On the 31st of December, 1847, he started early in the morning from Eisfeld, and walked the whole day across the snow-clad mountains to his home at Keilhau, where he arrived about midnight. He joined in the jovial meeting of teachers and pupils, and added in his usual way a great deal to the enjoyment of the assembly. After all had gone to bed, he sat up for several hours writing letters, a number of which were ready for mailing in the morning. Yet he was not late for breakfast.

³⁹ The assertion of Froebel "that a natural mode of life will strengthen such children as have been weakened and retarded in their development by dietetic mistakes," the editor of these letters has had confirmed repeatedly in his own experience. He was for years at the head of a boarding-school for boys, where regularity of life and a judicious diet, providing the best meals, but no sweets or cakes between meals, were customary. There was an official doctor to satisfy the requirements of anxious mothers, but his services were hardly ever required. Boys that arrived at the institution weakly, and given to all kinds of morbid habits, had their vigor restored rapidly, and dropped their unpleasant infirmities. Our city life usually overwhelms childhood with possessions, enjoyments, and experi-

ences so numerous and unsuitable to the youthful mind as to produce a state of excitement so much more deleterious as it is incessant. Such a state will engender debility, and predispose to disease. Holiday trips and sojourns at the seaside or at summer resorts are looked to for relief and cure. Such changes work a deal of good, no doubt, but only temporarily. With the return of the children to the city, the former mode of life begins again, and with it the action of the causes that produced all the former mischief. So long as these causes continue to injure the healthful development of childhood during nine or ten months of the year, periods of recreation of two or three months will not help a great deal, and the little good they might do is generally lessened by most families managing so as to keep up the injurious over-excitement during holiday times. To effect a cure, a lasting change of the entire mode of life is requisite. Urban over-excitement must be overcome by a plain, natural mode of life befitting youthful development. That will effect a cure without medical attention and without trips to sea baths and health resorts, for it will remove the causes of indisposition.

⁴⁰ This sentiment seems to be contrary to that of the world at large. People will commonly say that a man cannot succeed unless he knows how to keep silence upon his plans. Froebel, on the contrary, advises his friend to consult others upon his great scheme, and proceeds to give his reasons why such consultations ought to be generally resorted to. Both principles seem to be correct if properly adapted to different circumstances. People in general have to be afraid of

competition because they act from egotistic motives, and fear that others will do the same. The only way to prevent others from acting to the disadvantage of any man with whom they can compete, is that he should keep his plans and methods of action secret. But Froebel was not afraid of competition; on the contrary, he would have greatly rejoiced if thousands had arisen to compete with him in establishing Kindergartens. There was not a trace of egotism in him. He schemed and labored for nothing but the welfare of others. He had no occasion, therefore, to keep his schemes secret, but tried to spread them broadcast over the land, took everybody into his confidence, and found the philosophical reasons, which he enunciates in his letter, in favor of his conduct.

⁴¹ Many students of infantile life, both medical men and educators, have raised their voices of warning against sucking-bags or bottles given to keep infants quiet. But none of them connected the tendency to suck with the activity of the hands and fingers, as Froebel does. Yet there seems to be a connection, as Froebel asserts. Whatever a baby can reach is pushed in the mouth by the hands; and the hands are used to push down whatever the mouth may have received. Froebel concludes that engaging the hands in other pursuits will direct the energy of the child to the occupation of his hands by themselves, and deliver him from the predominance of the demands of his appetite. Thus, manual exercise is used by Froebel to keep the stomach healthy.

⁴² Froebel maintains that talking in a loud voice of warning, or shouting to babies, is wrong, whatever the

circumstances may be. Every sudden, loud sound will shock the nervous system of children and terrify them. Such a shock may at times be of good effect in older children, that are able to reflect and connect the shock and the menace contained in it with some preceding event. But babies are not able to reason about cause and effect. They feel the shock as an isolated occurrence. They are unable to understand any causal connection between their feeling of fright and an action of their own. The editor has known a man who had an only child, of whom he was very fond. He one day put his lips playfully to the cheeks of the baby, and sounded a steady, deep "Boo!" The child looked up in affright, set up a loud cry, and began weeping convulsively. Another baby about a year old was saluted in a stern, half-threatening tone by a visitor fond of practical jokes, and also began sobbing convulsively. For many weeks afterward, the child could never look at the same person without falling into another fit of sobbing.

⁴⁸ This warning, to be careful that impressions made and influences exercised upon children should be even and restful, studiously avoiding over-excitement, ought to be carefully heeded, not only where there are many persons about a child, but also where it is left to the sole care of the mother. It is true that children subject to an exciting treatment usually make an impression of being quicker and brighter than others; but this brightness is procured at the expense of the health of body and mind, and is followed, with rare exceptions, by physical and mental suffering in later years. It is not uncommon that children treated in accordance with the

natural method, as indicated by Froebel, like little Mary Arnswald mentioned in the letter, seem to lag behind in their mental development during the first years of life if compared with children educated in a manner to over-excite the nervous system. But if their natural gifts are only like those of their companions, made more lively by artificial incitements than they naturally should be, they will surely overtake the latter in the end. The educator who excites, has not learned to patiently await the spontaneous development in the natural growth of childhood. He will, for example, accelerate the power of muscular response to impressions, by not allowing time enough for the sensuous images to be duly cognized and connected with the store of percepts already retained by the infantile mind. He will show the child incessant changes of lights, colors, sounds, and movements, which will prevent any one impression to produce a lasting image. Or, in order to rapidly develop the power of speech, he will repeat to the child all manner of ready-made words and utterances, the meaning of which the child does not understand. Such utterances, not being of natural growth, will cause an over-excitement when they are received, and a similar over-excitement whenever the child gives them out again. Children brought up on this plan, live in an incessant state of excitement. They are credited with being exceedingly clever or "cute," and are the great pride of their parents, who will parade their precocity on every opportunity. It is a vanity for which the poor children have to pay a high price, and they are to be esteemed fortunate if they can ever overcome the loss of stamina produced by such an erroneous treatment.

In order to prevent such injuries to children, they should be surrounded with conditions of a sound, natural growth; or, to state it in a shorter way, should be reared by the Kindergarten method, that is to say, by the Froebel system. The parent is not to be alarmed if the Froebel-child seems to lag behind those precocious little ones whose minds are forced to display artificial blossoms like hothouse plants, and which will fade like these when exposed to the fresh winds of the open garden of nature. Let the mind of a child grow a little slower; there is no fear that it will continue backward and stunted. Nature will vindicate her superior power, if only the parent is assiduous in leading and inciting the child so far as is spontaneously indicated by its own love and tendency of learning and acting, that is, of receiving impressions and manifesting the appropriate responses, and of giving shape or objective reality to the subjective images of its own mind. This is what Froebel calls *entwickelnd erziehen*, i.e., educating by development, or by evolving whatever innate talents may manifest themselves. It is the opposite of a common-school education, which does not evolve talents, but pumps so-called knowledge into the children's minds, memory without reason serving as pumping-plug.

⁴⁴ Among the Germans, Christmas is, more than with any other nation, a children's festival. That is why Froebel attached so much importance to it. As all his reformatory ideas were directed upon the education of childhood, and through childhood of man, every institution that might in any way be turned to account for the advancement of popular education, engaged his

endeavors to develop it and render it better adapted to educational ends. It was this same purpose which he pursued in his endeavors to change popular open-air summer festivals, picnics, and excursions into what he called "Spielfests," or "festivals of games," a description of which, as Froebel had conceived them, was given in Letter 6, p. 65, and another will be found in this letter.

⁴⁵ This idea that a proper natural education of children is the best and surest way to reach, to influence, and to reform their parents, has been often repeated since the times of Froebel. A very attractive exemplification of the idea was given by Middendorff, as quoted in Note 25, p. 116. The idea is frequently stated in modern times, by saying that the quickest and surest method of reforming mankind consists in the abandonment of the adult generation, and in concentrating all attention and means upon the education of childhood.

⁴⁶ "Consistorium" is the name of a board of supervisors of churches and schools, appointed by a German government. Its functions are similar to those of governing bodies of different denominations in this country, such as presbyteries, synods, etc. Teachers and clergymen in Germany are bound to ask leave to do anything which is out of the common course of their duties, such as the festival of games proposed by Froebel.

⁴⁷ It is with an indescribable feeling of sadness that the editor finds himself compelled here to inform the readers of this letter of Froebel's, that the lovable and patient sufferer and friend of childhood, our great master of the New Education, was doomed to experi-

ence another painful disappointment with this his cherished plan of the Midsummer Spielfest (festival of games). It was never carried out. Within a few short weeks after he had penned the letter to his friend, Von Arnswald, the revolution of February and March, 1848, broke out, and caused a subversion of public institutions and social order so universal and complete as to render the execution of Froebel's plan impossible. As is evident from the whole cheery tone of the letter, Froebel had entertained great hopes that the festival might spread a knowledge of, and practical interest in, his natural method of education. The festival was to unite a number of teachers and schools and populations of villages and towns in a practical experience and participation in the joys which their children should find in the games, which Froebel would manage in a way to make them efficacious means of development and education. All these hopes of the old master came to naught.

⁴⁸ Sylvester is the name of the saint to whom the 31st day of December, or the last day of the year, is dedicated in the calendar. The evening of this day is a time of jollification in Germany and other countries of Europe. At midnight the New Year is "let in," as it is called, with ceremonies of different kinds at different places. It is this festival of which Froebel speaks.

⁴⁹ The German word "schwarz" means black. It is given as a name to a number of localities distinguished for their sombre appearance. The valley of which Froebel here tells is unusually narrow, like a deep canyon in the mountains of Western America. The dark forests growing from the brink of the little stream

to the tops of the mountain sides, are mirrored in the clear waters, and give to them the dark appearance on account of which the rivulet is called the "Schwarza." A spot most widely known among tourists and the travelling public in all countries is the "Schwarzwald," or Black Forest, in the southwest of Germany, so called from the dark appearance of its extensive fir-decked mountain tops.

⁵⁰ This was another forlorn hope which poor Froebel was compelled to relinquish. The institution at Eisenach was never established. It was the public disturbances of the year 1848 which prevented its establishment. The excitement of the political agitation was too great to allow a quiet movement, aiming to lay a foundation for the progress of mankind by means of a natural method of education, to adequately engage the interest of men. The hopes and fears of the promises and results of the political revolution kept the minds of the people so completely occupied as to render it impossible for them to devote their thoughts to an examination of the peaceable educational revolution intended by Froebel. The public looked out for political reforms as the only true panaceas for the ills oppressing mankind, and was thereby rendered incapable of understanding the principle of the *Kinder-garten*.

⁵¹ Well had Froebel a right to speak of many occasions which his life had offered him to prove his patience and perseverance. Neither could he have expected anything different. If you would be spared trials of unusual severity, choose a beaten track to travel through life, a track long laid out, and well-

trodden by thousands. In such a path, you will find guide-posts to direct you at every step you take ; and if you beware of jostling too much against those of your fellow-men who travel the same way, you will have a smooth road and will escape most of the disappointments, checks, and trials. Such as elect to find paths of their own must cut them through primeval forests in order to reach a goal unknown to the mass of men.

It is such new paths, that the prophet — the idealist who sees and wants to reach a new goal — has to travel. And that is the reason why he cannot escape numerous checks that try his strength, his faith, and perseverance to the utmost. And Froebel was such an idealist. The education of man was the ideal goal which he saw with his mind's eye and pursued all through his life. There was not a beaten track leading toward that goal, neither knew he the direction nor the mode of constructing the path that should lead there. Yet he boldly set to work upon his own road, confident that in laboring at it, he would find the proper method of doing the work.

And he did find it, but not until late in life. It was through the numerous checks and trials which he encountered that he was taught, and finally learned how to proceed. Undaunted by difficulties of every kind, he succeeded in realizing his ideas to an extent that could hardly have been expected.

At the beginning of his first enterprise, which was the school at Griesheim, later Keilhau, his capital in money consisted of five cents. Unable to pay for a night's lodgings out of that, he slept in a barn, on

a wisp of straw, and had a good rest. After that, when the school at Keilhau had been made a success, he had plenty of money, but never spent any for his own use. He applied everything he had to the perfection of his institute. That is the reason why, at the time when he wrote this letter, in his sixty-sixth year, he had no greater riches than on the day when he began his school at Griesheim.

His experience with the pupils whom he had educated at Keilhau, had convinced him that in all of them (and, he concluded, in all children), there was a defect of development of the mind, due to a lack of education during the first years of life. He had also learned, by the same experience, that it is impossible in later years to make up for what had been lacking in the first years of life. With this conviction in his mind, his activity as teacher and educator of boys of school age no longer gave him the satisfaction it had formerly afforded. He felt the need of something being done for infants between their births and the time of entering school. In order to be able to pursue that end, he dissolved his connection with the school at Keilhau, and devoted all his energy to infant education.

It was another path he was compelled to hew out and build for himself. The ideal to be reached by this path was altogether new, and, consequently, much stranger to the world than his former ideals. There was not the remotest chance of making money in this work. Then, how did Froebel manage to live? I do not know, and I believe he hardly knew himself. A crust of bread and a drink of water sufficed for the nourishment of his body, and his palate never longed

for any relish. Froebel had succeeded in completely subduing his bodily feelings, and rendering all his animal life subservient to his idea ; as far as my knowledge goes, there never was an ascetic who had so perfectly overcome the flesh as this man Froebel. Nevertheless, he never thought of asceticism as a principle of life. It was nothing but the overwhelming influence of his idea that had conquered his body.

Froebel was always welcome at the school at Keilhau, and felt the less delicacy in enjoying its hospitality, as his services and his advice in school matters were not only welcome but always desired. He had even held his normal courses for Kindergarteners there. But at the time when this letter was written, no normal pupils could be accommodated, for want of room, and thus he was compelled to look out for another place. Without money and without means, except his genius and enthusiasm, he was as poor then as he had been when he started his first school.

Nevertheless he did not despair. He continued to look out for new opportunities, and he found them, as is well known, at Dresden, at Hamburg, and at Marienthal.

⁶² The frequent mention which Froebel makes of Miss Luise Levin, his pupil, in this correspondence, shows how closely these two souls were already united at that period. As his first wife had been his true helpmate in his former enterprises, and had been the first to practically carry out his ideas of infant education, as shown in the "Mutter und Koselieder," thus Miss Levin had become the practical interpreter of his ideas

to his normal pupils, and her marriage to Froebel was only the crowning of a friendship, and of a unison of interests, of labors and ideals, that had already lasted through half a decade. There is no doubt but Froebel's life at Marienthal was not only made fruitful, but even rendered possible through her.

⁶⁸ Sounds must have a meaning. Speaking to children senseless sounds is even worse than giving to sounds an erroneous meaning. For errors of meaning can be corrected; but if the child has once been used to listen to and, consequently, to repeat sounds devoid of meaning, he will hardly ever be able to accustom himself to adapt sound and word to a corresponding thought. That is why Froebel says that a senseless word must, under all circumstances, produce an injurious effect.

To get a child used to hearing and speaking words without a clear meaning, is laying the foundation to the habit of talking without thinking. Well-uttered sounds, by themselves, produce a pleasurable feeling in a child, and will be imitated. The frequent hearing and repeating of meaningless sounds will engender a love of sounds without meaning, and this love will continue to adult life. A man brought up in this habit, will always love to hear big-sounding words, chiefly when spoken by his own organs of speech. And such men are by no means rare. They love to hear themselves talk, and care much more about the quantity than the quality of their speeches.

If you wish to educate men of thought, rather than heroes of "talk," remember from the first to use no words or sounds but such as convey a clear meaning to

the mind. When a baby first opens its eyes to the light, let it hear the word "light." A little later it may be shown light and shade, and hear the words "light" and "dark." In feeding it, do not call the food "good," or "goody, goody," because the word "good" ought to be reserved for a higher meaning; but use the word "sweet," with food of pleasant taste, and the word "sour," or "bitter," if you want to describe an unpleasant taste of something which the baby must avoid crowding into the mouth. The word "bad" ought to be more carefully avoided than "good," in connection with perceptions that are purely sensuous. Words similar to the above in this, that they express sensuous perceptions only, ought to be selected for use, so long as the mental activity of the baby continues confined to the life of the senses. Examples need not be multiplied, as sufficient instructions concerning the first steps in education are given in Froebel's numerous writings.

Among the most important primary ideas aroused by the first activity of the senses, are those of objects, of locality and motion. It is necessary, therefore, to pay particular attention to these relations in space. The words "here, there, left, right, forward, backward, up, down," etc., ought to be used with care in order to avoid causing confusion in the mind of the child.

So long as the mother has the child on her lap, and both are looking forward in the same direction, she can use words in space as she would for herself. But when the child faces her, the words "here, there, left, right, forward, and backward," must be used for the child in

a sense converse to that which would be right for the mother.

A similar consideration applies to a teacher who has a number of children facing her, either sitting at tables, or standing in a circle.

Memory acts by simple association in time. Let the child see a light and hear the word "light" at the same moment, and the two-sense impressions of the eye and ear will be retained by memory as belonging together. By such association, the sound and the object are united, or the sound, or word, is freighted with a meaning. Any sound which a child hears for the first time, will be in its memory connected with the object or event which it sees or feels at the same moment. For such reason, it is necessary that the word spoken should correspond to the image present at the time to the mind of the child.

The action of memory you cannot command or direct as you like. You must be careful to make use of it according to its natural rule of action.

Avoid erroneous associations between sounds and impressions of objects or events. If you are careful to have always the proper sound, together with the event, memory will do the rest, providing a well-ordered store of conceptions regularly associated with appropriate names.

Supposing you have a number of balls of different colors, and set them running fast one after the other, crying out, "helter-skelter," the two impressions will remain associated in the child's mind. Seeing the rapid motion of many colored balls, it is delighted, as children always are on perceiving motion. Hearing the word "helter-skelter" at the same time, it will con-

nect that word with the pleasurable impression produced by the balls moving rapidly. Produce the same pleasurable impression by a rapid movement of another sort, and the "helter-skelter" will again be connected with it in the child's mind. It is very likely, then, that, for a time, every rapid motion will be to the child a "helter-skelter."

If you raise up an infant's arms and hands and say, "*So* big is baby," the child will have the pleasurable impression of the muscular movement of the arms and connect with it the sounds, "*so* big," with the accent on the "so." Let the child in any position stretch hands and arms over its head, and the feeling will call up the sound "so" mostly without anything else, or if with any addition, it will be some remnant of the word "big." Or, the upward stretching of the arms will be associated in the child's mind with the sound "so." Such was not the educator's intention, no doubt, but it is a necessary result of the previous association, that the sound "so" is expressive of the stretching of the arms high over the head in the child's mind.

Take the first gift, the ball, hold the child on your lap facing you, and move the ball toward the baby and again toward yourself, saying or singing, "To you—to me." I have seen and heard this done as it is above described. What must be the result? The child has the impression of the ball moving toward him, associated with the sound *you*, and the motion away from him associated with the sound *me*. This is a palpable confusion between ideas and words. If the child sees his dog running away, he will call out *me*; and when

doggy comes back, he will receive his pet with the joyful salute, *you*.

Such confusion is the natural result of an erroneous application of the words *you* and *me*, made at a time when the child had no notion of a personal pronoun.



FROEBEL'S HOUSE OF BIRTH AS IT IS AT PRESENT.

Showing the Froebel Tower on the mountain, and votive tablets
in front of the house.

CHAPTER IV

FROEBEL IN HIS STUDY

THOUGHTS FROM ARISTOTLE AND CICERO.

I HAVE in my library a collection of quotations from famous men of all nations and tongues, which book was once in the possession of Froebel and used by him almost daily. He has written notes on the margins in which he says how he understood the quotations. Some of the more instructive of these notes are here given.

Aristotle says: "Man is conscious of being an unfinished, imperfect, equivocal being, and struggles to reach unity and perfection: this struggle is his proper tendency, his humanity." — Froebel writes: "Man is conscious of having been made a perfect being, but that his exterior is imperfect, and his struggle consists in trying to externalize his perfection."

Cicero says: "Man is distinguished from the animal by his reason enabling him to exchange thoughts with his fellows by means of the faculty of speech." — Froebel says: "The faculty of speech ought here to be called the faculty of intercommunication. Speech acts by attracting or repelling. Speech is a means of communication in the physical sense similar to electrical or magnetic communication. We might say, ν and ν or Δ and Δ understand each other easiest because a drop of the former unites easiest with another drop of the same sort to one whole."

Cicero says : " Man is the only animal that has a sense of order, a conception of decency and morality, a rule for speech and action. No other animal has a conception of the beauty, the grace, or harmony of outward shape." — Froebel adds : " The full development of this sense and these conceptions is the least which an effective education must set up for its goal. The ideas enumerated may also serve as indicating the steps or periods of human development."

Kant says : " In order to assign to man his place in the system of animate nature, we have no other criterion than this, that he has a character which he creates himself." — Froebel says : " The real question would then be, which character is man able, in and from the highest summit of his development and his knowledge of his own self, to create for himself? There is nothing to fall back on but the character of God, which makes man's character a likeness of God."

Sam. Pufendorf says : " In the mind of man is found impressed the tenderest esteem of his own self. The first basis of this esteem the human nature in itself seems to be. There is already a sort of dignity found in the name 'Man.' This human nature being common to all men alike, and no one being able to live in the society of another who should not at least esteem him as a man, it follows according to natural law that every one must treat every other as a man and as his equal."

— Froebel adds in the margin : " This passage is very remarkable and highly suggestive. Much, very much, is gained for the education of the individual as of a whole nation and of all mankind, if this tender esteem of self takes deep root in the mind. It is the office of

the educator of man to give a permanent development to this tender esteem of mankind for its own self, and to make it productive. The sense of woman tends in that direction ; yea, female sentiment is striving for this tender self-esteem. It is developed in the æsthetic education of man, that is, of children and men."

Ch. Garve says : "If a man shall have the strength to suffer or to achieve anything, he must be conscious of his worth. Without a consciousness of personal dignity he is not capable either of rising above external matters or of manifesting a telling power. Such consciousness of his worth may be needed to enable him to make an effort : thus self-esteem becomes a motive to exercise his powers in order to prove the extent of his dignity. In this manner, the sentiment of worth gives strength ; but a feeling of baseness renders powerless." — Froebel adds : "Hark, oh Educator ! you shall raise man, yea, all mankind, to a consciousness of their power, which is a spirit emanating from God. Life, suffering, pain, and depression, must serve to elevate man to a consciousness of his worth."

The following passages from Kant and Rousseau were heavily underlined by Froebel: "Unholy as a man may be, mankind must always be holy to him in his own person. Whatever a man has the will and the power to use anywhere in nature, he is able to use as a means only ; but man alone, and with him every reasonable being, is an end by itself." "Be a man through thyself and for thyself : The mind of man is its own end."

Herder says : "Everything in nature appears connected with man, because man does not perceive nature

but through his own organs. Man is indeed the first, but he is not the only creature. He has dominion over the world, but is not himself the universe. That is why the elements of nature are often opposed to him, forcing him to struggle against them. Fire will destroy his work; inundations will cover his acres; storms will wreck his vessels, and disease will decimate his numbers. All this is placed in his path that he should overcome it, and to do so he has the requisite weapons in him."—Froebel explains this passage, saying: "The elements of nature and, like them, uncivilized man, are opposed to man, not by their essential nature but only on account of their crudeness, their unruly and unmanageable form. It is the business of man to refine and restrict, to rule and manage them,—uncivilized man as well as the other rough parts of nature; for man in his unrefined condition, or if deformed by incorrect development, is naturally good and capable of improvement. He will overcome the opposing forces of nature by overcoming his own self, that is, by studiously observing his own faculties and learning how to use them in an appropriate manner."

Claudius says: "Man exercises a kind of dominion over outward nature, and seems to be destined to do so above all other creatures. Small as he appears, he will try his strength on anything, and nothing seems impossible to him."—Froebel adds: "The end of this dominion is that man should learn to measure his faculties, and by measuring should learn to know himself."

Leibnitz says: "Man has strength enough in him to control his arbitrary will, but we do not always understand how to use it. We can master ourselves, not as

God masters the world, but rather like a wise ruler governing his state, or like a good father ruling his family." — Froebel adds: "On this power of self-control over our will depends our submission to the will of God."

ORIGIN OF THE NAME "KINDERGARTEN."

It was a beautiful day in the summer of 1839, when Froebel, accompanied by Middendorff and Barop, was walking from Keilhau to Blankenburg. In the latter place he had founded his first institution for the education of infants, that is, of children that have not yet reached the age at which they could be received in a public school. He was very busy at the time, trying to interest women in his ideas and to establish societies of women interested in and devoted to the furtherance of his system of combining a proper course of education with the duties commonly assigned to the nursery, that is, an infant-school system which should be a nursery attending to the needs of the intellect and character as well as to those of the body. These ideas filled his mind all the time, and during this walk he had exclaimed several times in a low voice: "If I knew only a suitable name for my youngest child!" meaning the youngest child of his inventive thought, namely, the nursery-school he had founded at Blankenburg. They had just crossed the ridge of a mountain called "Steiger," and were descending the mountain-side into the beautiful and fresh-looking valley of Blankenburg. Proceeding slowly, Froebel took in all the beauty of mountain-side and forest, of the valley with its fields and houses, its sparkling little water-

course and the busy life of the people about their farmsteads. The little town beneath him looked like a bouquet of flowers in a circle of green leaves, the bright homesteads representing the flowers, surrounded by meadows and gardens full of fruit-trees, and beds of flowers and greens. The whole looked like an extensive natural park, or rather an immense garden where art had done little, but nature a great deal, to please the eye of the lover of natural scenery. Greatly pleased with the beauty of the landscape, and lost in hopeful forethought of the future of his nursery-school, upon which his mind was lovingly fixed, he suddenly arrested his progress, and with eyes sparkling with enthusiasm he called out so loud that the echo from the mountains returned the words in distinct and powerful reverberations of the air,—

“Eureka! *Kindergarten* shall be the name of the new institution!”

CHAPTER V

FROEBEL AND DIESTERWEG⁵⁴

AT HAMBURG IN 1850.

FROM 1836 onward Froebel and his co-laborers, among them none more than Middendorff, had been active in propagating the principles of his system of infantile education and had had very fair success at many places in Germany. Among the latter no city was more remarkable for its unremitting zeal in the cause than Hamburg. A ladies' society had there been formed for the advancement of the Kindergarten system, and for the higher education of women as the natural educators of childhood. There were already some such institutions in a flourishing condition when the society, recognizing the necessity of spreading this kind of education among the poorer classes, formed a scheme to establish what they called Bürger-Kinder-gartens, a name which may, to a limited extent, be considered as corresponding to what are called Free Kindergartens with us. In the visitors' book of the first Bürger-Kindergarten of Hamburg the following two entries continue to attract the attention of visitors to this day :—

Visiting the first German Kindergarten, not only of Hamburg but of all the world, I again am blessed in

realizing the experience of the fact, that living with children, chiefly with children at play, elevates, clears, and invigorates our own life in feeling as in thought. Would that this experience were brought home to ever-increasing numbers of people, in order to bless all mankind, that is, to lead them to a consciousness of a genuine human existence, by spreading far and wide in the German nation the Kindergarten institutions, most of all the Bürger-Kindergarten.

FRIEDRICH FROEBEL.

APRIL 16, 1850.

A Bürger-Kindergarten fills the visitor with a high respect for those who have founded it. It is the working Kindergartener, however, to whom the praise is most properly due. The former have built the house, the latter is storing the honey, and is the working bee in the hive of the Kindergarten.

DIESTERWEG.

APRIL 26, 1850.

NOTE

⁵⁴ Dr. T. A. W. Diesterweg was one of the most famous of modern German pedagogues. He was the head master of the Normal school for teachers of the city of Berlin. His chief works are of practical value to teachers in every branch of school tuition. He was one of the most talented and best-known disciples of Pestalozzi.

Hattie Burmeister



FRAU LUISE FROEBEL.

Born at Osterode, April 15, 1815.

Living at Hamburg. From a photo taken January, 1892.

CHAPTER VI

FRAU LUISE FROEBEL

PERSONAL REMINISCENCES.

My first meeting with Frau Luise Froebel, the widow of that wonderful children's friend, the famous discoverer of the Kindergarten system, was, perhaps, the most propitious event of my life. It was like the dawn of a new day rising above what till then had been the horizon of my intellectual life. It was the beginning of a friendship rich in happiness and blessings, and destined, I trust, to continue in time and in eternity.

It was a bright spring morning in 1871. Animated with my morning walk under the beautiful linden trees of the boulevard (just sprouting to put on their spring dress), bound for my day's work at the "Musical" Kindergarten founded by Frau Caroline Wiseneder, I had hardly entered the room when the proprietress informed me that Frau Froebel had sent word by mail that she would arrive that morning from Hamburg in order to visit our Kindergarten and acquaint herself with the method of the musical system.

Could there be anything more joyful? My heart beat livelier at the cheering expectation of meeting the wife of the great educator, the same lady who was

known to be the most accomplished of the assistants of Froebel — the one who had realized his ideas with the greatest perfection.

But I was not allowed much time for either thought or preparation. For while our children were still arriving, the door opened and admitted our revered guest, Frau Froebel. I was charmed with her striking appearance. Her figure was tall, erect, and remarkably well proportioned. Her carriage and movements were elastic and graceful. Her face had an expression of freshness, I would have said of youthfulness, but for the grayish tint of the hair, indicating her advanced age, and forming a striking frame for a countenance beaming with a charming vivacity, producing a conviction that her soul had preserved a youthfulness much greater than her gray hair seemed to indicate for her body. Her beautiful blue eyes bespoke an unusual development of loving-kindness. Her whole appearance was, in a word, one to win all hearts.

After the first introductory words, she said she had heard so many expressions of praise of the Musical Kindergarten that she thought it her duty to make herself acquainted with it. Then she turned her kindly eyes upon the children, saying, "I have come early; a Kindergartener ought always to be at her place in good time."

At her request, the games and occupations and the musical exercises were gone through in the usual way. The children and the normal pupils of the music school and the Kindergarten had assembled, and the cuckoo-clock sounded its cuckoo-call nine times. That was the signal for beginning, and everybody stood silent

and listened until the sound of the ninth call had passed away.

The work of the Kindergarten was gone through in the usual way. There was, of course, no time during school-hours for conversation with Frau Froebel, except some occasional questions and answers or observations in reference to the work going on. Frau Froebel went to and fro, observing everything, and every now and then actively interfering or directing, with the hand and word of a thorough master. She was greatly pleased with the questions and remarks, occasionally very "cute," as she said, of her little "man-buds." Her winning ways proved as powerful an attraction for the little folks as for the grown-up people.

At the close of the "musical exercises" Frau Froebel expressed her regret at having been unable to become acquainted with Frau Wiseneder herself, who had died two years before, much too soon for her work and the Kindergarten cause in general. Her games and songs, published years ago, were extensively used all over Germany, and in Frau Froebel's Kindergarten at Hamburg among the rest. The mature judgment of Frau Froebel had not failed to appreciate their value, and she was much pleased to be able to perceive by a personal inspection how well adapted this musical method was to form and develop the sense of time. She said she would introduce the little instruments in Hamburg and use them, as she saw them used by our children both in bands and solos.

After the close of the Kindergarten Frau Froebel asked me if I would accompany her to her hotel, as she

was a stranger in the city of Brunswick. I was proud to be allowed to go with her. I asked her to tell me what should be done to improve our Kindergarten.

"What I missed most," she answered, "is the union of all the children and Kindergarteners in a circle at the beginning and the close, and the song in which all should join. The Kindergarten," she continued, "is the first community or state organization into which the child is introduced. It is not enough that he should merely learn to do his duty there as an individual, but he must be led to feel and experience that he is a member of an organic whole; and must do his share toward making and keeping it a harmonious whole. He must feel himself a necessary member in his class, or section, as the smaller whole to which he belongs, and feel as well that this lesser whole is again a member of the larger whole constituted by the entire Kindergarten. In that way, the Kindergarten must be made the prototype of human society. This idea is made a living sentiment and an active motive in the child, by the daily reunion of all the members of the Kindergarten in the circle and song at the commencement and the close of the exercises. And I am further of opinion," she added, "that a similar reunion of the whole school ought to take place at the beginning and the close of every day in every educational institution, from the first primary grade to the upper grades of the high school (Gymnasium)."

I felt the strength of her argument, and answered that I should follow her advice and begin immediately in the morning to open and close our Kindergarten with a "Froebelish reunion."

We arrived at the hotel too soon to please me, and we parted with a cordial "au revoir!"

I hastened home and found dinner waiting for me. I had hardly entered the room when I exclaimed, "Just think, Frau Froebel was at the Kindergarten! I have just accompanied her to her hotel, but I should much rather have brought her home with me."

"If you think she will feel comfortable with us, why did you not bring her?" asked my mother. And my father, in his short and decided manner, said, "We shall wait for dinner. Go for her and tell her she would be welcome."

You can imagine how I hastened to do his bidding. I had not yet taken off my shawl and bonnet, and in less than a minute was in the street again quickening my steps toward the hotel. I had hardly spoken my words of invitation when Frau Froebel took my hand, pressed it cordially, and said, in her most insinuating tones, "Oh, how glad I am to go with you! For I can tell you, it would have been the first time in my life that I had to remain at a hotel. Wherever I travel there are kind people meeting me, and they always take me to their own homes. I had just made up my mind to depart this day and go back to Hamburg. But now things look different. I am quite ready to go with you right away."

A welcome as cheerful as it was cheering greeted the illustrious guest, the days of whose presence at our house were esteemed true festivals by all of us. I shall never forget this afternoon with its never-flagging conversation and the wonderful light it threw into many recesses of my mind which had before been in

obscurity more or less dense, in spite of the presence in the room of a great many educational books in our library, to which Frau Froebel paid her most careful attention.

During the days which Frau Froebel spent with us, I hardly ever left her side. In our room, in the Kindergarten, on her walks, in the visits she made, I was her inseparable companion, and during this companionship she imperceptibly enlightened and confirmed in me every essential principle of the educational teachings of Friedrich Froebel. What a study of books could not have taught me in years of untiring industry, these few days of *viva voce* intercourse with this living source, sprung from the original fountain head of Kindergartenism, imparted to me in a manner similar exactly to the method which Froebel had elaborated for the Kindergarten work itself.

Of the walks we took, and the educational institutions we visited, I have only space to mention a few. There was a masonic children's refuge, or *crèche*, remarkable for its exceeding cleanliness and the care and attention paid to the babies intrusted to it. Health and cheerfulness were visible on every side, and Frau Froebel was much pleased.

In another part of the same building, children a little older were assembled, namely, those too old to be among the babies and too young to go to the public school ; that is, those who ought to have been at Kindergartens. There was a great noise when we entered the room. The so-called teacher tried to restore order by telling the children to sit still and keep quiet. Her success was as great as it usually is in such cases,

the children never relinquishing their unruly behavior. They had nothing to do, were not occupied in any work or play provided by the teacher, and had too much life in them to sit still like dead dolls. When they perceived the presence of visitors, they became quiet to a limited extent, held by a feeling of curiosity, but not so completely as to permit, at any moment, the teacher to discontinue her stereotyped order to keep quiet and sit still. Awed by our presence, they took their seats and sat still for a few seconds, except one little boy, whose intense want of activity would not let him sit still. So, while sitting in his place, he rapidly made four knots in the corners of his red handkerchief, put it on his head in lieu of a cap, and stood up again smiling with satisfaction at his success. At this, the lady, mis-named a teacher, grew excited and began expostulating with the little mischief-maker, but only succeeded in causing all the children to turn their eyes upon this impromptu specimen of little Red Ridinghood, which produced a resumption of the general noise of amusement and playfulness. This scene was too much for Frau Froebel; she could not restrain herself, but leading me quickly out of the room, she whispered to me, "That is right; it is exactly what the child is naturally compelled to do; he is not able to sit idle; he has too much life in him to be crushed out by any teacher's order to sit still; he is the best specimen of mankind I have seen in the room. But I felt the necessity to leave. I should not have been able to look upon that maltreatment of childhood much longer without actively interfering in their behalf, which, I am afraid, would not have been welcome to the teacher. It would only

have disconcerted and annoyed her, I suppose, without doing any good either to the teacher or to the poor children." I think, however, I ought here to add that that refuge is no longer in the same unsatisfactory condition, but that the room for older children has since been transformed into a regular Kindergarten.

With a number of friends we took a walk one day to the neighboring village of Melverode. On the way I had an opportunity to perceive and admire Frau Froebel's thorough acquaintance with botany. The leaves of the trees were just coming out, which gave her an occasion to speak of the buds of leaves just opening, and of the "flora in winter dress" in general. Finding buds of the willow and chestnut trees, she said, "Were I at home I should gather a number of them to give to my children in the morning. I seldom have a walk without finding something and taking it home for my little ones. Every Kindergartener ought to do likewise." And taking up a number of buds, she added, "Froebel frequently pointed out the beauties of the curved lines of nature which have never yet received the amount of attention they deserve. There are no straight lines in animate nature, you see. You must go to the mineral kingdom, to the rock and crystal, to find straight lines in nature. In the vegetable and animal kingdom none but curved lines are found. And here you will discover the principle for the distinction between the beauty of architecture and the beauty of other kinds of art. Beauty in architecture depends on the use of the straight line chiefly: beauty in the arts of painting, sculpture, etc., depends upon the curve almost exclusively."

She arranged the buds in the hollow of her hand in a sort of rosette, and continued, "Look here, what a beautiful form can be got out of these buds. Such, you see, is true Kindergarten work; it not only makes the child conversant with nature, but it produces or strengthens the love of nature, and, last not least, develops the sense of beauty. Besides, the stories of the growth of buds, of their development and conditions during the successive seasons of the year, of their inner arrangement of parts and their outer coverings, of their relation to the life of the entire plant, and so on, may be made to convey some of the fundamental principles of the science of botany.

"Botany," she proceeded to say, "is one of the most essential, if not the most necessary, of all the secondary accomplishments which a Kindergartener ought to have. And the local flora should be known more particularly. Wherever we are, we are able to find plants to be used as material for object lessons in botany; and it is of the utmost importance to begin this, as any other branch of study, as near home as possible. By connecting the knowledge of the child with his immediate and nearest surroundings, we produce in him the feeling of being at home in the world. If wild flowers can be gathered in the fields, they are the best material for study. But, in case of need, garden flowers can be substituted for them. If there are weeds in the garden, they ought not to be overlooked, as they are among the most beautiful products of nature; and a knowledge of them will prevent a child from regarding them as noxious things of no value but to be destroyed when and where they can be seized. Such a feeling of hatred against

any product of nature will, more frequently than is commonly supposed, engender or greatly strengthen the disposition of destructiveness which is closely akin to that of cruelty.

"In teaching botany, trees and shrubs and fruits and vegetables of every kind ought not to be neglected. In observing the life of shrubs and trees through the seasons of the year, not only most useful lessons can be practically inculcated, but a habit of order, of steady and permanent observation may be educated.

"In crowded neighborhoods of large cities, where the children of the poor can neither go out into the fields to gather wild flowers, nor have parks or gardens near their homes to supply plants, they may go to green-grocers' stores to buy or beg a few specimens to be used for an object lesson in botany. If the Kindergartener is well prepared for her office, such lessons can be made eminently useful.

"It must be kept in mind that the study of botany should not merely serve to teach the children a knowledge of the vegetable kingdom by itself, but should implant in them a love of nature in general. Wherever a man may be, he is always surrounded by vegetation. A knowledge of it will, therefore, resemble the knowledge which a child has of his paternal dwelling which by such knowledge becomes his home. Thus, by a knowledge of the vegetable kingdom the child learns to be at home in nature. And further, a knowledge of the beauties of plants will produce an admiration and love of them. It will, consequently, prevent children and men from wantonly breaking or destroying vegetable products. And he who has learnt to respect the rights

of plants to live and bloom and grow, will surely not fail to respect also animal life, and will refrain not only from cruelty toward animals, but also from neglecting such living creatures as may be intrusted to his care."

I wondered not merely at the knowledge of the science of botany displayed by Frau Froebel, but even more at her enthusiastic love of the flowery kingdom, and at the profound philosophical view she took of the whole of nature, which seemed to lend a soothing glow to everything she spoke ; and I expressed my feelings to her.

" That is so," she replied. " I believe, if I had been a boy, I should have become a gardener."

And that is what she has become, indeed, a true nursery gardener ; only, hers is not a nursery of trees, but a nursery of men.

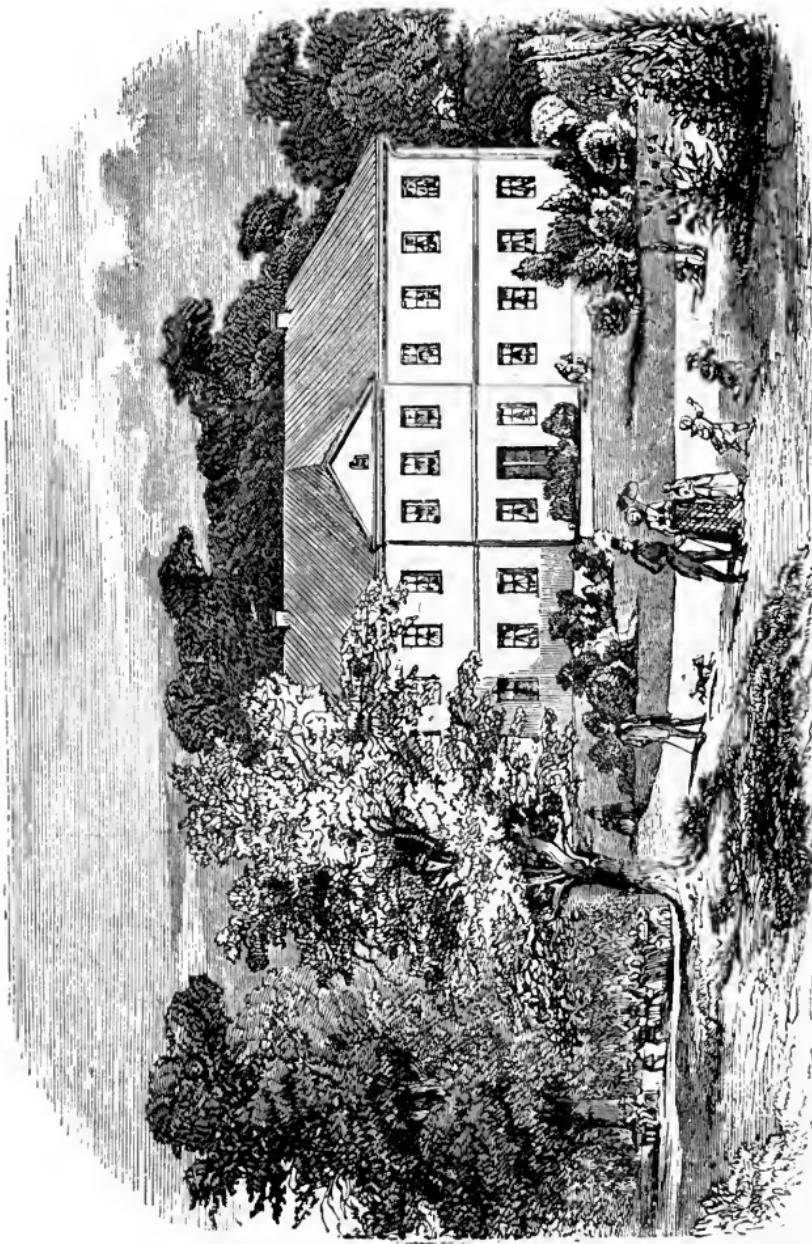
MARIE HEINEMANN.

CHAPTER VII

FRIEDRICH FROEBEL AND HIS FAIR HELP-MATES

A SKETCH WRITTEN FOR THE ONE HUNDRED AND
TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS BIRTH.

A HUNDRED and ten years have passed away since August Wilhelm Friedrich Froebel was born (April 21, 1782), at a small woodland village in the uplands of the Thuringian forest in central Germany. His father was a clergyman, a devout Christian, and never weary in pursuing the duties of his office. He was not one of those who preach on Sundays and take their rest during the remaining six days of the week, but a working pastor in the true sense of the word. He considered it his duty to be an all-round adviser and helper to his parishioners in their daily life and struggles; to watch and exhort such as were morally weak; to visit the sick; to weep with and console them that weep, and rejoice with them that rejoice; to remember the poor, and plead for and help the fatherless and the widow; and last, not least, to provide for the welfare of the coming generation by looking, with particular care and attention, after the education of childhood.



MANSION MARIENTHAL: FROEBEL'S HOUSE OF DEATH.

Here he carried on his Normal School during the last years of his life.

His son August, at a later period of life called Friedrich, seems to have been a child of an uncommonly sensitive and observant disposition. With his open eyes and expectant heart he received the seeds of faith ripened and strewn by the active religion of his father, in a well-adapted and fertile soil, from which sprang a tree of religious peace and confidence of uncommon vigor and beauty, animating and sanctifying the whole life and being of the great Kindergartener. In all the severe trials of his life, and whenever a hope of his was frustrated, as happened many a time, Friedrich Froebel would quietly say to himself that obstacles and difficulties are the means by which Providence seeks to strengthen and elevate man. Trials and disappointments he received as necessary dispensations, and never lost his hopes of final success. His father could not bestow upon Froebel either wealth or an education sufficiently liberal and thorough to greatly facilitate his journey through life. But he left him a better portion — a deep religious sense, which was the rock upon which Froebel was able and successful to securely lay the foundation of a life of greatest usefulness to all mankind and ideal contentment to himself. His religion was his code of ethics throughout his active life. Sacred hymns and scripture passages had a powerful influence on him, and became his practical rules of conduct. The most powerful in its action upon him, and the most beneficial to all mankind through the application which Froebel made of it, was the command of Christ, "Suffer little children to come unto Me." Do we, does the professing Christian of our times, act up to this command? was a question which Froebel moved in his mind and

tried to answer. He was convinced that, under present circumstances, little children are not suffered to freely approach the Christ who is the Almighty Origin of life. A strong fence of erroneous views surrounds them, which ought to be broken through to let in the light of nature as it is, and as it is found realized in Christ's word and life. Who can break through that fence and suffer little children to move through it? Who are they to whom Christ is calling to suffer little children to tread the path of true salvation? They can be no others than those that have power over children to direct them, which are parents and guardians. It is to them in their own sphere and rule, that is in the family and home, that the call sent forth by Christ must be considered addressed.

“In order to render the command of Christ effective,” says Froebel, “education in the family must first be reformed, otherwise there will be no solid foundation for subsequent education to stand on.” It is the mothers that must first be educated, and it is chiefly for them that Froebel has remodelled the words of Christ, saying, “Come, let us live for our children.” But it is not enough, he adds, to suffer children to go; all adults, male and female, ought to show children the right way. Neither is it enough to merely point out the way without going in it yourself, for children will imitate what they see their superiors doing. To guide them, we must act as we want them to act, we must live as we wish they would live. It is in accordance with such considerations that Froebel thought it expedient to expand the words of Christ into the summons, “Come, let us live for our children!”

He further argued that not only mothers are naturally well qualified, and have the most frequent and most effective occasions to guide children, that is to educate them, but that the same must be said, though not quite so generally, of the future mothers, or young women. Having clearly recognized the great vocation of woman as the true, yea, he thought, almost the only, educator of man, Froebel thenceforward devoted all his time and energy to the problem of winning the adhesion of woman to his educational scheme ; of interesting and training her in the art, and, as far as feasible, also in the science of education ; of persuading her to take up the great task of educating man, and to recognize in it the sublime mission and heavenly blessedness of a woman's life.

Was it a revelation that had come through Froebel's spirit ? The response seemed to prove that it was : women from every side responded to his summons with great enthusiasm. It was as if Froebel had really struck the keynote of the tune to which the life and destiny of women were ordained to move. If we look over the long array of names that call themselves disciples prepared by the master himself, under his own eyes, and through hearing the living word from his mouth, they are nearly all females. And they all acknowledge that nobody, either male or female, has ever recognized and indicated the true vocation, the life work, the destiny of woman to form and elevate and bless mankind, as clearly and distinctly as Froebel did. He never sided with the partisans of what was then called the emancipation of woman ; but he said that woman would have to work out her own salvation by her own

labor, which was indicated to consist in the work of educating man.

Froebel had a grand conception of woman, and, although he never emerged from a condition of poverty, he was married twice. Difficult would it be, indeed, to say anything more honorable of woman. For Froebel was not able to guarantee a certain income, or, for that matter, any income at all, to feed his wife and himself. All he possessed was his ideal of the education of man. There was no certainty that there would ever be any pupils to be educated by him who would or could pay for their education. And repeatedly Froebel and his assistants had had to pawn whatever there was of silver or gold in the house in order to raise the money for buying bread. Such was his situation when Froebel asked Mrs. Henrietta Wilhelmina Klepper, *née* Hoffmeister, of Berlin, to be his wife. The lady had lived all her life in the most comfortable, almost affluent circumstances. But she relinquished everything, even a house of which she was the light and joy, a dear mother and a greatly beloved father who adored her, in order to devote her whole life and being to the apostle of a new education, whose ideas and schemes had elevated her soul as with the light of divine inspiration. She was married to Froebel on Sept. 20, 1818, the thirty-eighth anniversary of her birth.

Never has man found a better helpmate than this woman was to Froebel. She devoted herself to the assistance of the Keilhau teachers and their educational mission with her whole being; made willingly every necessary sacrifice; submitted smilingly to every priva-

tion ; lived through days of the most painful struggles with poverty and want, and did all this with a courage and devotion that was a shining example to all the women who had devoted their lives to the realization of Froebel's ideals. They all admired and adored her. She had not, like them, entered the poverty-stricken household of Keilhau quite young, that is, before having seen and tasted the enjoyments and luxuries of a comfortable home ; but she had passed more than half a life-time already in comparative affluence when she became the companion for life of the poor pioneer of a new education of mankind. But she never seemed in the least to miss her former luxuries, but joyfully and heroically suffered want and care and anxiety. After a time, when the circumstances of the school had grown easier, they all enjoyed greater comforts of life. The wonderful enthusiasm of the teachers, and the wisdom of the educational methods employed, had, in a few years, made the average pupil of the Keilhau school so greatly superior to the average pupil of all other educational establishments of the country, that the number of pupils at Keilhau increased rapidly, and money began to flow more freely in the households of all the teachers.

This outward success of the Keilhau school was due, to a considerable extent, to the labors of Henrietta Froebel. The noble lady knew exactly the duties of a wife that has become one with her husband, not only bodily, but more fully even in the spirit. She had not only understood the ideas and aims of Froebel, but had so completely made them her own as to partake of all his tendencies and keep up an enthusiasm as ardent and

ever active as his. And it was this very enthusiasm which had enabled her for longer than a decade to live from day to day with the questions ever present, and but rarely answered with certainty, What shall we eat? Wherewith shall we be clothed? She had cheerfully borne the brunt of these anxieties and cares, and provided for the needs of Froebel as best she could. Her hopefulness and quiet trust in God under all circumstances had been like an inspiration to the whole scholastic colony, and served to keep their minds as free from cares as possible, and thus to enable them to devote themselves entirely to their educational duties. In this way she had been all the time the true helpmate and support of Froebel in his great work.

Although Henrietta Froebel was not exactly a business woman, she had bravely helped in building up the institution and had rejoiced in its temporary success. She had outlived the first period of gloom and uncertainty, which had surrounded the work from the start, and was conscious of having done her share toward bringing about the happy result. And it was not either her fault nor the fault of any of the co-workers at Keilhau, that the number of pupils had fallen from sixty to five in 1829. The decline of the institution at that time was the result of the oppressive persecution of every reformatory movement which characterized the period, and placed the liberal education of Keilhau on the index of institutions to be suppressed.

The unfortunate conditions of his school had given Froebel the time and occasion to reconsider his educational principles. He had become convinced that the system which he had introduced at Keilhau did not

rest upon a solid foundation. Such a foundation must be laid, he thought, in an institution where the pupils should develop their intellect and character by their own labor. He planned an institution at Helba in Thuringia to be composed of what may be best characterized a "Manual Training School," and a "preparatory institute for children of from three to seven years." The scheme was not realized, but it arose again in a new form in the Kindergarten seven years later.

Henrietta Froebel had faithfully advanced with her husband in the evolution of his educational ideal. When the new idea of the "Infants' Preparatory Institute" and the "Manual Training School" assumed shape, she hailed the idea as a greater and sublimer goal than his former ideas, with a cheerful courage proving that the decade of labor and trouble at Keilhau had not been able to crush her spirit or nip the buoyant hope of her soul, that the idea must succeed and be realized in the end.

She knew that the end might be a long way off, and that, during the pursuit of it, poverty and privations would again be her daily experience. She realized more clearly than Froebel that the pursuit of ideal schemes will strew obstacles thick as pebbles in the path of life, rendering progress difficult, and the duties of life a heavy burden. But this conviction did not lessen her heroic enthusiasm. Having devoted her life to the cause of elevating mankind by educating youth, she did not now hesitate to follow Froebel farther on his thorny path of duty. She followed him to Switzerland, and there again enjoyed a few years of comparative comfort, until the new ideal of the Kindergarten

drove him back to his old haunts in the Thuringian mountains, where another period of uncertainty and privations followed.

Yet her uplifting enthusiasm did not forsake her. She shared the hope of Froebel that he was approaching the realization of his hopes. But she was not destined to accompany him to the end of this, his third expedition into the unknown realm of ideals. She had to leave him at a time when the sympathy which a great many people offered to his endeavors to establish the Kindergarten System, held out a first promise and hope of early success. She died May 13, 1839. And Friedrich Froebel stood alone again in his labors for the education of childhood.

Keilhau is one of the most attractive spots in the Thuringian Forest, which is not a region of great height, but famous for its beautiful and fertile valleys, offering a great variety of the most beautiful scenery found anywhere. But nowhere has it a true highland character. That is different in the so-called Harz Mountains, which may be said to form the north-western part of the territory of Thuringia. The two mountain systems are separated by a comparatively narrow valley of renowned fertility called the Golden Aue (prairie). The Harz is of the nature of a real highland, reminding the tourists of the high crests, the steep slopes, and the precipitous valleys of the Alps. It does not rise to a great height, its highest summits being little more than half the height of Mount Washington, in New Hampshire. But the valleys between the mountain spurs are deep and narrow.

I would now lead the reader to one of these valleys

in order to introduce him to the lady that was destined to become Froebel's second wife. From the north-western boundary line of the Harz Mountains a valley stretches about twenty miles long to the foot of the highest mountains of the range, in a direction nearly due east and west. The upper half of the valley is narrow, being taken up in its entire width by the mountain current flowing through it. Nearly midway of its length the valley begins widening, until it measures across two miles and more. At the point where the widening of the valley begins, a dam runs across the river-bed, raising the water a few feet, and turning the current into a canal which runs along the south side of the valley for a length of three or four miles before re-entering the bed of the stream. All along this canal a number of factories of woollens, flour-mills, metal-works, etc., are located. Along the stream and the canal the city of Osterode is located.

At the time when Friedrich Froebel established his first school at Griesheim, his elder brother, Christian, was the owner of one of the factories in Osterode. He had always been a loving brother, sympathizing deeply with the educational ideals of Friedrich. To him Friedrich travelled when, in 1816, he had decided to start his school. His brother Christoph had died in 1813, and the widow was at a loss how to provide a good education for her four children. She knew that her late husband had frequently spoken and exchanged letters with Friedrich on educational questions, and that he had always been glad to receive and be guided by Friedrich's advice. So the widow wrote to Friedrich, asking him to advise and assist her in her dilemma.

Friedrich took this letter as a hint from on high. He had hardly finished reading it when his latent interest in the education of man suddenly manifested itself in all its power and energy, and pushed him irresistibly forward to take up his natural vocation and be a teacher. He resolved to devote himself to the education of his nephews. He resigned his office as assistant superintendent of the mineralogical museum of Berlin, and travelled directly to Griesheim in Thuringia, where his sister-in-law lived. She had three sons, of whose education Friedrich promised her to take care. But he wanted more than three pupils. So he went to his brother Christian at Osterode, and soon persuaded him to let his two sons go with their uncle to Griesheim to be there educated.

The family of Christian Froebel lived on intimate terms with the neighboring family of Levin, where there were also a number of children, among them a baby girl of the name of Luise,— eighteen months old when Friedrich Froebel, her future husband, saw her for the first time.

When Luise learned to walk, her first wanderings took her across the street to the house of Christian Froebel, whose children became her daily playmates. But these happy days of babyhood were suddenly cut short when Christian Froebel, with his whole family and household, removed to Keilhau in 1820. This removal caused the thoughts of little Luise, even at that early age, to turn toward Keilhau. She was induced to write letters to her former playfellow, Elise Froebel; she exchanged with Elise seeds for their gardens; they sent flowers to each other, and in many

similar ways kept up the friendly sentiments they had had for one another in former years.

After a time there occurred a visit of the Froebel boys to their old friends at Osterode. Little Luise was much interested in her friends, who appeared to her greatly superior to all her acquaintances among the boy natives of Osterode. Then the brothers of Luise returned the visit; and after having come back, they never tired of talking of the wonderfully happy life of the boys at Keilhau and of the unparalleled kindness of "Uncle Froebel," a title which they adopted from the children of Christian to apply to Friedrich Froebel. They also brought home a heap of things which the Keilhau boys had made and given, chiefly models of toys, of furniture, houses, machines, etc., cut out of wood, or of cardboard pasted together. These were handled daily by Luise, who knew each of the things by the name of the boy that had made and sent it. In this manner the thoughts of Luise Levin were, from her earliest childhood, and step by step, as though guided by a superior intelligence, kept turned steadily toward Keilhau and its school, and toward him who was the founder and the soul of it. Luise Levin knew Friedrich Froebel long before she saw him in the body. An invisible bond of sympathy united her soul with his. So when they met within the walls of the same institution which he had called into existence, he soon felt that there lived a kindred spirit in her, and that she was destined to take the place of her who had been his faithful helpmate in former years.

It was in July, 1845, that Luise first set foot on the ground of Keilhau. She was thirty years old. Although

she had been separated from the family of Christian Froebel when she was only five years old, she had no difficulty in making friends with the three daughters of Christian Froebel, who were then Mrs. Middendorff, Mrs. Barop, and Miss Elise Froebel, the former correspondent of the child Luise. Friedrich paid her a visit a few days after her arrival, and gave her much friendly counsel which she remembered well, and rendered useful in her duties and relations to those around her.

But why did Froebel not live in the Keilhau school? Why did he leave the management of that institution to his assistants? Luise failed to understand the condition of things. She did not know anything of his Kindergarten ideas, and had no conception of the fact that he had sacrificed his position at the head of the school at Keilhau, and subsequently also that at Burgdorf in Switzerland, in order to "devote himself altogether to the training of women for the scientific development of the dawning faculties of infancy." She failed to understand what was going on when she saw Froebel, Barop, and Middendorff one day walking up and down the yard engaged in earnest conversation. Mrs. Middendorff, perceiving the curious look on the face of Luise, proffered the explanation, "Uncle wants more money for a journey to propagate his new ideas, but Barop will not let him have any." This explanation was more puzzling to Luise, because she still thought that Froebel was the head and owner of the school; and if he was, why did he go to Barop to ask for money?

There was a mystery which she could not fathom. But as she was a woman, and a true woman, for that

matter, everything mysterious attracted her powerfully. Friedrich Froebel grew more and more interesting to her. She had always looked upon him as a great man, but surely he was greater than she had believed him to be. She must wait in patience. A time would come when she could look through the mystery.

In the year following, Froebel again taught a normal class of young ladies. One of them repeated to Luise the lectures which Froebel delivered to the class. Luise listened to them at first because they came, indirectly at least, from Froebel. She also loved to listen to the conversations among the normal pupils, for there fell every now and then a word about Froebel. Once she heard one of his pupils say, "Here at Keilhau you do not know what Froebel really is: you ought to see the veneration which people at other places bestow on him." So she longed to know all that was actually said about him.

Her next step toward a comprehension of the new ideas of Froebel was taken when she saw the "Mutter and Kose-Lieder," that wonderful book of instructions for the mother, how to lead her baby the first steps in the course of the development of body and soul. She was greatly struck with the book, and exclaimed, "This book is beautiful beyond comparison!" Frau Middendorff answered, "It is no doubt, and it has cost money enough; more, in fact, than will ever come out of it again." Luise felt these words like a stab at her heart. Supposing Froebel had spent more money on the book than it would yield again, had he not done so in the service of education, for the welfare of mankind? And was not his book a monument

erected to the memory of his wife? Who was there that should have dared to blaine him to his face for so generous a deed in the service of mankind, and so tender a memorial to her who had been his faithful companion and sister genius in the most trying years of his life? All these questions and considerations were awakened in her soul. And had she not known that Middendorff was a true and self-denying friend of Froebel, she might have been angry with her friend, Frau Middendorff. But it became clear to her beyond a doubt, that Friedrich Froebel was a man of mark, immeasurably above the ken of all those surrounding him.

On her birthday, on April 15, 1847, Friedrich was already so well acquainted with her that he gave her a little present, accompanied by verses. During his absence from Keilhau he wrote letters to her, and when she had gone away for a short time he did the same; and she, of course, answered.

Luise was now very anxious to become well taught in the educational principles which Froebel was then trying to disseminate, and joined a normal class in the winter of 1847-48. She worked hard, and was greatly profited by the course. When Froebel, in the summer following, went on a lecturing tour to a number of places in the country all around Keilhau, Luise Levin was able to accompany him and take charge of the play and games of the children that were to illustrate the lectures.

In the fall of the year Miss Levin went to Rendsburg, a city north of Hamburg, for the education of the little children of a family related to Mrs. Luetkens

at Hamburg, one of the greatest admirers and friends of Froebel. At Christmas, the same year, she met Froebel again at the house of a relation of his at Bergedorf, a small city a few miles east of Hamburg.

At the beginning of the summer season of 1849, Froebel went to the fashionable watering-place of Liebenstein, in Thuringia, trying to obtain the lease of Marienthal, a mansion near Liebenstein, belonging to the Duke of Saxe-Meiningen. He intended holding his normal courses there. He finally succeeded in obtaining the lease. Until the contract was closed he found temporary lodgings at a farmhouse in the neighborhood.

He communicated his new move to his old friend and assistant, Luise Levin at Rendsburg, indicating, of course, that her help was needed in Liebenstein. True, he had with him a grand niece who had also studied under him and was a very apt pupil. She kept house for him, and aided in taking the normal pupils through the practical work of the occupations and games. Nevertheless, he knew that Luise would work more in unison with him; and she herself felt that her old friend was not as comfortable as he might be. They both felt a lively desire to be reunited in their work. It held Luise no longer at her comfortable place at Rendsburg. She determined to leave the situation and rejoin Froebel as soon as a substitute was found to step into her place.

She left Rendsburg and went to Liebenstein in July, 1849.

From that time forward Luise lived at Liebenstein and Marienthal, and had her hands full of work. She had to keep house not only for herself and Froebel, but

also for a number of normal pupils. Besides, there were numbers of people every day visiting the institution in order to see and be profited by the educational work carried on by Froebel. Liebenstein was at that time one of the most fashionable watering-places of Central Germany. During the fine season there were always many visitors, among whom Froebel was a never-ending theme of conversation. The most remarkable among the visitors that went to study Froebelism at its fountain head, were Adolf Diesterweg, next to Froebel the most renowned educator of Germany of this century, and Baroness Bertha von Marenholtz-Bülow, who has since published a number of books treating of the Froebel education.

Except the period of care and want during the first years of the school at Keilhau, when he was still of the opinion that he was launched on the right current of education, there was probably not another period in the life of Friedrich Froebel that afforded him so much satisfaction as his normal school at Marienthal. "I have now found the locality," he says, "where I am able to carry the fundamental thought of my method to its final conclusions. In Keilhau it will never be possible to establish an institution for the training of women. Look at the mountains and the whole neighborhood there, and you will feel with me that nature refuses to have it there."

Froebel still travelled a good deal. The greater part of the winter 1849-1850 he was at Hamburg, lecturing and conducting the work in Kindergartens, a number of which were established during the time. He went home to Marienthal when the spring of 1850

commenced. After that time he took no more long journeys, but devoted nearly all his time to his normal school. "Now followed," writes Luise, "a sweetly regular time of steady work, interrupted only by walks, refreshing alike to pupils and teachers, to body and soul."

This quiet life continued uninterrupted to near the end of Froebel's life. At the beginning of the next year Froebel made preparations for his marriage to Luise Levin. Not that he expected that the marriage relation would greatly affect the mutual understanding and co-operation between them. But he wished to honor his best assistant, who had assimilated his ideas so completely as to deserve being called his other self, by bestowing on her his name,—that name which was forever identified with his educational ideas. Luise Levin had already, in her capacity as his girl assistant, grown to be his helpmate to an extent as great probably as his first wife had ever been, though in an entirely different manner. She had imbibed his ideas and principles, his views of life and principles of ethics, his profound religious convictions and perfect trust in God, and had assimilated it all so thoroughly that there was hardly anything left of her own original nature. She was the most perfect reproduction of Froebel's own self that can be conceived, taking into account that he was a nature altogether original and creative, and she was to the same extent receptive and reproductive.

"In childlike veneration," says she, "I had at first tried to approach him in thought. His ineffable kindness of heart toward the weak, managed to draw out to him all my confidence and trust. At length both sides

felt a desire to be legally linked by the closest ties. His age was no drawback at all with me. In my eyes he was the greatest and the best of men, and I only wondered how he could condescend to care for a girl so much beneath his level in every respect. The only anxiety I had was to make sure that the rather unusual step of a marriage at this time of life should have no damaging influence upon the great work he had to accomplish in the world."

And surely it was the very reverse of an impediment to his life-work. This pure union of two kindred intellects was the greatest possible help to the Kindergarten cause. The marriage ceremony was performed July 9, 1851, Froebel being sixty-nine, and Luise thirty-six years old.

Less than a month after the marriage, a terrible stroke was aimed at Froebel and his life-work. The Minister of Education in Prussia, Von Raumer, on August 4, prohibited Kindergartens in the kingdom. Grieved as Froebel naturally was at the obstacle to the progress of his work, his trust in God did not waver for a moment. "Such opposition," said he, "forces us back upon our principles. I lived through such a storm in Switzerland. We came out of that persecution victorious."

True, in this case also, victory was achieved, but Froebel had to pay for it with his life.

He was not the man to throw up his hands. He wrote to the Prussian Minister, and sent copies of all his writings, books and pamphlets, asking for a thorough examination of the papers and books, and for an investigation of his work at Marienthal. And forestalling

action on the part of the government, he sent out invitations to a great many people interested in education to meet at Liebenstein and investigate his proceedings. The meeting occurred Sept. 27 to 29, 1851. The assembly, after having gained a thorough insight into the educational principles and practice of Froebel, resolved to publish a Kindergarten review in order to instruct the people and the teachers and governments in the principles of the new education.

The Prussian Ministry refused to spend time upon an investigation into the Kindergarten education. They simply sustained their order of prohibition. What else could have been expected of a government blind to everything but its own selfish and sordid pecuniary and military interests? Froebel was deeply aggrieved at so manifest an absurdity, and he seriously considered the question of emigrating across the Atlantic Ocean, to this land of the free. Mrs. Froebel had a brother living at Philadelphia. To him Froebel sent a scheme outlining the establishment of a Kindergarten, and a normal school connected with it, at the Quaker City. It was too late. His course was nearly run.

The 70th birthday of Froebel had been celebrated on April 21, 1852, in a manner to awaken in him a feeling of true elevation of spirit. Still under the influence of the festival, he received letters with clippings from newspapers in Hamburg containing attacks upon his religious principles. He was deeply affected by it, and found no rest until he had written a lengthy reply. All these troubles affected the old man, and shook his health powerfully; and, for the first time in his life, his

body refused to do what his intellect demanded as necessary.

In Whitweek, 1852, the general congress of German teachers at the city of Gotha honored Froebel by an invitation to attend their meeting. He went, was greatly honored, and enjoyed the event. His reception by his pupils on his return to Marienthal was also of a cheering influence. Nevertheless he seemed unable to shake off and forget the injustice which he had suffered, and the false accusations against his religion which had been made at Hamburg. He did not recover his full strength, and was taken seriously ill on June 6. The strong man had never before had a serious illness, and could not understand why a slight cold should affect him so greatly. He grew weaker and weaker from day to day, until the end came on June 19, 1852.

With the most unshaken trust in his wife he had expressed his conviction that the Kindergarten was safe in her care and in that of his old and tried friend Middendorff. He had also commended his wife to the care of that good friend of his. But uppermost in his thoughts during the closing days of his life was his religious belief. He had his godfathers' letter read to him, calling it his letter of credit for heaven, and repeating again and again the words used in the letter, that "the Saviour should thenceforward hold immediate communion with him in justice, grace, and mercy." He said he had "labored to make Christianity a reality," and he repeated many times with great emphasis the words that he was "a Christian man." All this was proof how deeply rooted his religious ideas were, and how painful the slur had been to him which those



FROEBEL'S MONUMENT.

Hamburg newspapers had thrown on his religious sentiments.

His death was peaceful. Deeply afflicted as his widow was, she had profited enough under his tuition to look for work as the only solace in so great a bereavement. And since that time Luise Froebel has devoted her whole life and energy to the active propagation of his system of education. The city of Hamburg, where she has been residing since his death nearly all the time, holds the foremost rank among the cities of the world as a Kindergarten centre, having, in proportion to its size, the greatest number, and, probably, the most Froebelish Kindergartens in the world.

Frau Froebel was seventy-seven years old on the 15th of April, 1892. She has, like her late husband, preserved a freshness of sentiment, of sympathy and activity, which all her friends greatly admire. Her looks also are comparatively fresh, allowing us to hope that she may be spared for many years yet to assist the world in the active work of propagating the New Education according to the principles of Friedrich Froebel.

The present life of Frau Froebel is as comfortable and pleasant as a lady of her age and aspirations can expect. She is living in the city of Hamburg where her residence is located in the pleasantest and most fashionable quarter. She has been for years, and is at present, in receipt of an allowance large enough to enable her to satisfy all her legitimate desires and wants, and to leave something to give toward the numerous charities and needy Kindergarten institutes with which her active life of beneficence brings her in contact. Her circle of acquaintance is large, and there are many

whom she calls her intimate friends. There are few people of her age so happy as she is, not only through the comforts of her private condition and her social affiliations, but through her consciousness of having lived a life of service and usefulness to mankind by doing to the fullest extent her duty to the memory of her husband, whose spirit she has kept actively marching on.

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